

Gal. 10 M. b. # 10 late a.

JULIAN.

O R

A DISCOURSE

Concerning the

EARTHQUAKE

A N D

FIERY ERUPTION,

Which defeated that Emperor's Attempt to rebuild

the Temple at Jerusalem.

I N W H I C H

The reality of a divine Interposition is shewn;

The Objections to it are answered;

A N D

The nature of that Evidence which demands the
assent of every reasonable man to a *miraculous* fact, is considered and explained.

By the Rev. Mr. WARBURTON, K.
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Nesciunt Necessaria, quia supervacanea dedicerunt.

SENECA.

L O N D O N,

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M D C C L.

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INTRODUCTION.

A sovereign contempt for the authority of the FATHERS, and no great reverence for any other, is what now-a-days makes a Protestant in fashion. But as I imagine Religion loses something, and Learning a great deal, by the neglect in which they lye at present, I should have been tempted to say a word or two in their behalf, even tho' the subject of the following sheets did not require that they whose testimony I make some use of, should have their pretences examined, and their character fairly settled. But what is here insinuated to the discredit of the *present* mode in Theology, is not said in behalf of the *past*, but of that which good sense seems ready to place between them.

THE authority of the FATHERS had now for many ages, been esteemed *sacred*. These men, by taking the Greek Philosophers to
a their

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their assistance in explaining the nature and genius of the Gospel, had unhappily turned Religion into an *art* ; and their successors, the SCHOOLMEN, by framing a body of Theology out of Them, instead of searching for it in the Scriptures, soon after turned it into a *trade*. But (as in all affairs where Reason does not hold the balance) that which had been extravagantly advanced, was, on the turn of the times, as extravagantly undervalued; It may not therefore be amiss to acquaint the English Reader, in few words, how all this came to pass.

WHEN the avarice and ambition of the Romish clergy had, by working with the superstition and ignorance of the people, erected what they call their Hierarchy, and digested an ecclesiastical policy on the ruins of Gospel liberty, for the administration of it, they found nothing of such use for the support of this lordly system^a as the making

^a Comme l'autorité fait le fondement de cette étude [la Theologie] il est juste de deferer absolument non seulement à l'Ecriture sainte, mais encore aux sentimens des *Peres*, qui nous ont expliqué la tradition, sur tout à ceux que l'Eglise a canonisez, pour ainsi dire, par son approbation, ou en tout ou en partie. *Traité des études monastiques* par Mabillon, p. 360.

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the authority of the Fathers sacred and decisive. For having introduced numerous errors and superstitions, both in Rites and Doctrine, which the *silence* and the *declarations* of Scripture equally condemned, they were obliged to seal up those living Oracles, and open this new warehouse of the Dead. And it was no wonder if in that shoal of writers (as a poet of our own calls it) which the great drag-net of time hath inclosed and brought down to us, under the name of *Fathers*, there should be some amongst them of a character suited to countenance any kind of folly or extravagance. The decisions of the *Fathers*, therefore, they thought fit to treat as Laws ; and to collect them into a kind of Code under the title of the *Sentences*.

FROM this time every thing was tried at the bar of the *Fathers* ; and so unquestioned was their jurisdiction, that when the great defection was made from the *Church of Rome* back again to the *Church of Christ*, the Reformed, tho' they shook off the tyranny of the *Pope*, could not disengage themselves from the unbounded authority of the *Fathers* ; but carried that prejudice with

a 2 them,

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them, as they did some others, of a worse complexion, into the Protestant religion. For, in sacred matters, as Novelty is suspicious, and Antiquity venerable, they thought it for their credit to have the *Fathers* on their side. They seemed neither to consider Antiquity in general as a thing *relative*, nor Christian antiquity as a thing *positive* : either of which would have shewn them that the *Fathers* themselves were modern, compared to that authority on which Reformation was founded ; and that the Gospel was that true antiquity on which all its followers should repose themselves ^b. The con-

^b The Roman Catholics have long objected to us the *Antiquity* of their Church, as one of its greatest supports. But none of them have been so ingenuous as the admirable author of *L'Esprit des Loix*, to shew us wherein the force of this argument consists. *L'antiquité* (says he) convient à la Religion, parce que souvent nous croyons plus les choses à mesure qu'elles sont plus reculées : car nous n'avons pas dans la tête des idées accessoi- res tirées de ces tems-là qui puissent les contredire. Vol. ii. p. 203. 8vo Ed. But then unluckily this force lyes in the supposition of its being not a *true*, but a *false Church*. For tho' *false* religion receives an advantage from the oblivion of those discrediting circumstances which attended its original, and which time hath now deprived us of ; yet *true* religion

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sequence of which unhappy error was, that, in the long appeal to Reason, between Protestants and Papists, both of them going on a common principle, of the decisive authority of the *Fathers*, enabled the Latter to support their credit against all the evidence of common sense and sacred Scripture.

At length an excellent writer of the *Reformed*, observing that the controversy was likely to be endless ; for tho' the gross corruptions of Popery were certainly later than the third, fourth, and fifth Centuries, to which the appeal was usually made, yet the seeds of them being then sown, and beginning to pullulate, it was but too plain there was hold enough for a skilful Debater to draw the *Fathers* to his own side, and make them water the sprouts they had been planting : observing this, I say, he wisely projected to shift the ground, and force the disputants to vary their method, both of at-

receives infinite damage from the same effects of time, because several circumstances now lost, which accompanied its birth, must needs have greatly confirmed its character. For it is as much in nature that the circumstances attending truth should confirm it, as that the circumstances attending error should detect it.

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tack and defence. In order to this he composed a discourse of the *true use of the Fathers*°. In which, with uncommon learning, and strength of argument, he shewed, that the Fathers were incompetent deciders of the controversies now on foot; since the points in question were not formed into articles till long after the ages in which they lived. This was bringing the *Fathers* from the bench to the table; degrading them from the rank of judges, into the class of simple evidence; in which, too, they were not to speak, like *Irish* evidence, in every cause where they were wanted, but only to such matters as were agreed to be within their knowledge. Had this learned critic stopped here, his book had been free from blame; but at the same time his honest purpose had, in all likelihood, proved very ineffectual: for the obliquity of old prejudices is not to be set strait by just reducing it to that line of right which barely restores it to integrity. He went much further: and by shewing, occasionally, that they were absurd interpreters of holy-writ; that they were bad Reasoners in morals; and very loose evidence in facts; he seemed willing to have

° *De l'Emploi des Peres*, par M. Daillé.

his

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his Reader infer, that even tho' they had been masters of the subject, yet these other defects would have rendered them very unqualified deciders.

HOWEVER the work of this famous Foreigner had great consequences : and especially with us here at home. The more learned amongst the Nobility (which, at that time, was of the Republic of letters) were the first who emancipated themselves from the general prejudice. It brought the excellent Lord *Faulkland* to think moderately of the Fathers, and to turn his theological inquiries into a more useful channel. And his great rival in arts, the famous Lord *Digby*, found it of such use to him, in his defence of Reformation against his cousin Sir *Kenhelm*, that he has even epitomised it, in his fine letter on that subject. But what it has chiefly to boast of is, that it gave birth to the two best defences ever written, on the two best subjects, *Religion* and *Liberty* ; I mean Mr. *Chillingworth's Religion of Protestants*, and Dr. *Jer. Taylor's Liberty of Prophecy*. In a word, it may be truly said to be the storehouse, from whence all who have since

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written popularly on the character of the *Fathers*, have derived their materials.

DR. *Whitby*, in whose way they fell as *Interpreters of Scripture*, hath, in imitation of the pattern *Daillé* set him, made a large collection from their writings, to expose their talents for *Criticism*^d. In the same manner, and in a larger volume, Mr. *Barbeyrac* afterwards treated their pretensions to the science of *Ethics*^e: And now of late the very learned and ingenious Dr. *Middleton*, finding them in the support of Monkish Miracles, hath written as largely to prove their *Testimony* in matters of fact to be none of the clearest.

So that these several constituent parts of their character being thus taken up in their turns; and the whole order exposed as incompetent Judges of Doctrine, as trifling Interpreters of Scripture, as bad Moralists, and as slippery Evidence; it is no wonder the *English* reader, who only measures them by such representations, should be disposed to think very irreverently of these early Lights of the holy Catholic Church.

^d *Dissert. de S. S. interpretatione secund. Patres.*

^e *La Morale des Peres &c.*

BUT,

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BUT, let us lay aside prejudice on either hand, and we shall see enough to persuade us, that disputers, who have little more in view than to support a favourite charge, will not always be careful to preserve their candor. In the heat of a prosecution, proofs will be apt to be overstrained: but admit they are not; and that the facts are fairly represented; what considerate man will think himself able to form a true judgment of a character, when no more of it is laid before him than a collection of its blots and blemishes?

THERE were always some indeed, till of late, who preserved their moderation (which, in matters where our interests are highly concerned, as in Religion and Politics, is not easy to do) and these were wont to say, "That tho' we should indeed suppose the Fathers to be as fanciful Divines, as bad Critics, and as unsafe Moralists, as *Daille*, *Whitby*, and *Barbeyrac* are pleased to represent them, yet this would take nothing from the integrity of their Evidence: and what we want of them is only their Testimony to facts." But now, even this service is thought too much. The learned Author of the *Free Inquiry*

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Inquiry seems unwilling to allow them this small remnant of credit: which he has certainly much hurt by exposing their excessive credulity in point of false Miracles. But, controversy apart, I see no reason why their veracity should be questioned when they bear witness to the state of Religion in their own times, because they disgraced their judgment, in giving ear to every strange tale of Monkish extraction. The most learned and virtuous Divine of the barbarous ages is the venerable *Bede*; and the honestest as well as most discerning historian of those, or perhaps of any age, is *Matthew Paris*: yet their propensity to recount the wonderful exceeds all imagination. Neither learning, judgment, nor integrity could secure them against the general contagion. Now if this disposition was, in them (as is confessed) only the vice of the *times*, is it not unjust to ascribe the same disposition in the *Fathers*, to the vice of the *Men*?

BUT our folly has ever been, and is likely to continue, to judge of antiquity by a modern standard: when, if we would form reasonable ideas on this subject, we should compare the parts of it with one another.

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We examine the conceits of a *Basil* or an *Austin*, on the test of the improved reasoning of our own times. And we do well. It is the way to read them with profit. But when, from a contempt of their logic, which follows this comparison, we come to despise their other accomplishments of parts and learning, we betray gross ignorance or injustice. To know the real value of the *Fathers* we should place them by their contemporaries, the Pagan writers of greatest fame and reputation; and if they suffer in their neighbourhood; e'en let them stay, where most of them already are, with the Grocers. But it is a truth none acquainted with antiquity can deny, how great a secret foe ever modern Divines make of it, that as polite scholars (and it is that which we now most affect to value) whether in eloquence, ethics, antiquity, or philosophy, the Christian writers have indisputably the first place. Nay, one may venture to say, there are some of them who have successfully rivaled the very best writers of antiquity. *St. Chrysostome* has more good sense than *Plato*; and you may find in *Lactantius* almost as many good words as in *Tully*. So that if, on the principles of a classical taste, we discard
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the *Fathers*, we should discard along with them the *Pagan writers* of the same ages ; unless the wonderful Theology of the Latter can atone for (what they both have in common) their false rhetoric and bad reasoning.

THESE imperfections, therefore, being common both to *Gentile* and *Christian* writers, it is plain they were the faults of the Times, and not of the Men. For whatever advantages the ancients might have over us in the arts of poetry, oratory, and history, it is certain, that in the *Science of Reasoning*, as far as it concerns the discovery of moral truth, the moderns are infinitely superior.

THOSE who are not able to form a comparison between them, on their own knowledge, may be reconciled to this conclusion, when the *peculiar hindrances*, in the ancient world, to the advancement of moral truth, on the principles of a just logic, have been laid before them.

THE cultivation of the art of reasoning on this subject, was, in the most early times of learning, in the hands of their *Orators* and *SOPHISTS*. Whatever was the pro-

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profession, the real business of the *Orator* was not to convince, but to persuade; and not in favour of truth, but of convenience or utility: which, again, was not general utility (for that coincides with truth) but particular; which is often at variance with it. So that their art of reasoning, was as much an art to *hinder* the discovery of truth, as to *promote* it. Nor was that part which was employed in the support of error merely lost to the service of truth. The mischief went further. It brought in many fallacious rules and modes of reasoning, which greatly embarrassed and misled the Advocate when he was employed in a better cause. Particularly those by *similitude* and *analogy*: which had their rise from hence; and soon spread, like a leprosy, over all the argumentation of antiquity.

WE need not wonder then, if under this management Truth was rarely found. What seems to be more strange is, that when it was found, its value was so little understood that it was as frequently sacrificed to the empty *vanity*, as to the more solid *interest*, of the disputer. For the *Sophists*, the
abstracted

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abstracted Inquirers after truth, made their wisdom (from whence they took their name) to consist in bringing truth to the side of their reasoning; not in bringing their reasoning to the side of truth. Hence it became the glory of their profession to demonstrate for, or against any opinion, indifferently: and they were never better pleased than when that was prescribed to them for their subject, let it be what it would, which their auditors had a mind should be the truth. The difficulties they frequently had to encounter, in support of so extravagant a character, introduced into the ancient reasoning new modes of fallacies, a set of *metaphysical quibbles*, which being the invention of *wise Men*, are fitted only to impose on others as *wise*.

BUT tho' so much had been done to betray, to estrange, and to discredit truth; yet common sense revolts against every thing when it becomes, to a certain degree, unnatural. This insolent abuse of Reason, now proceeding to an open mockery of Truth, brought the *Sophists* into public contempt: and gave room to another set of men, of a
modester

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modester denomination, to raise themselves upon their ruins.

THESE were the PHILOSOPHERS: and to these, it must be owned, the Gentile world owed all its real improvements in the art of reasoning, and advancement in truth. But the defects of their constitution, the errors of their principles, and the folly of their conduct, were so great, that truth was kept in that state of inferiority, in which, we say, it came to the *Fathers* of the Church. It would ill suit the occasion of this discourse to explain these things at large: we can only hint at some of the most considerable.

THE *Philosophers* presently ran into two extremes, of all things the most hurtful to reason, *Scepticism* and *Dogmatizing*. There they doubted too much; here, too little. And these vices they contracted of the stock from which they sprung, the *Sophists*: who by their custom of disputing for and against every thing, brought every thing, in its turn, according to the temper of the recipients, to be firmly embraced, or wantonly doubted of. For extremes *often* beget, and,
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when they have begot, *always* support one another.

A SECOND injury to reason was that principle, which they all held in common, *that truth was ever to give place to utility*. A principle which had the appearance of modesty, ^{as} seeming only to imply, what is very true, that we are less able to judge of *causes* than *effects*; but, indeed, the natural issue of the inveteracy and absurdity of popular Paganism, and of its incorporation with the state.

ANOTHER principle held by them in common, and no less injurious to the rights of reason, was that the fundamental doctrines of each Sect were to be held unquestioned by all who professed themselves of it. For, in most societies, Truth is but the second care; the *first* is to provide for themselves: and as this can be done only by uniformity of opinions, and opinions will continue no longer uniform than while they remain unquestioned, an *ipse dixit* was the *rule* of all, tho' the *badge* only of one Sect. These several defects in the constitution of ancient *Philosophy* had, in course of time, brought on others. The Dogmatists, as was natural,

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ral, grew *enthusiastic*; and the Sceptics *immoral*. The two worst disasters that can befall a searcher after Truth. For her abode is neither in the clouds, nor on the dung-hill.

TAKE then all these things together, and we shall see, they must be insuperable bars to improvement, in the science of moral reasoning.

BUT to this it will be said, that those two great instruments of Truth, LOGIC and MATHEMATICS, were, the one invented, and the other highly advanced, in these very Ages. It is certain they were. But if the plain truth may be told, the use of these boasted instruments goes no further than to assist us, the one in the FORM of *reasoning*, the other in the METHOD of *discourse*.

ARISTOTLE's invention of the *Categories* was a surprizing effort of human wit. But, in practice, *Logic* is more a *Trick* than a *Science*, formed rather to amuse than to instruct. And, in some sort, we may apply to the *art of syllogism* what a man of wit says of *Rhetoric*, that it only
b teacheth

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teacheth us to *name* those tools, which nature had before put into our hands, and taught the use of. However, all its real virtue consists in the compendious detection of a Fallacy. This is the utmost it can do for Truth. In the service of chicane, indeed, it is a mere juggler's knot, now fast, now loose; and the *Schoolmen*, who possessed it in a supreme degree, are full of its Legerdemain. But its true value is now well known: and there is but little need to put it lower in the general estimation.

HOWEVER what *Logic* hath lost of its credit for this service, *Mathematics* have gained. And *Geometry* is now supposed to do wonders as well in the system of Man as of Matter. It must be owned, the real virtue it hath, it had acquired long since: for, by what is left us of antiquity, we see how elegantly it was then handled, and how sublimely it was pursued. But the truth is, all its use, for the purpose in question, besides what hath been already mentioned, seems to be only habituating the mind to think long and closely: and it would be well if this advantage made amends for some inconveniencies, as inseparable

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rable from it. It may seem perhaps too much a paradox to say, that long habit in this Science incapacitates the mind for reasoning at large, and especially in the search of moral Truth. And yet, I believe, nothing is more certain. The object of Geometry is demonstration, and its subject admits of it, and is almost the only one that doth. In this science, whatever is not demonstration, is nothing; or at least below the Professor's regard. *Probability* thro' its almost infinite degrees, from simple ignorance up to absolute certainty, is the *terra incognita* of the Geometrician. And yet here it is that the great business of the human mind, is carried on, the search and discovery of all the important Truths which concern us as reasonable creatures. And here too it is that all its vigour is exerted: for to proportion the assent to the probability accompanying every varying degree of moral Evidence requires the most enlarged and sovereign exercise of Reason. But the harder the use of any thing, the more of habit is required to make us perfect in it. Is it then likely that the *Geometer*, long confined to the routine of demonstration, the easiest exercise of Reason, where much

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less of the *Vigour* than of the *Attention* of mind is required to excel, should form a right judgment on subjects, whose Truth or Falshood is to be rated by the probabilities of moral Evidence. I call mathematics the easiest exercise of Reason on the authority of *Cicero*, who observes, *that scarce any Man ever set himself upon this study, who did not make what progress in it he pleased*^f. But besides acquired inability, prejudice renders the veteran Mathematician still less capable of judging of moral Evidence. He who hath been so long accustomed to lay together and compare ideas, and hath reaped the richest fruits of speculative Truth for his labour, regards all the lower degrees of Evidence as in the train only of his mathematical Principality: and he commonly disposes of them in so despotic a manner, that the *ratio ultima Mathematicorum* is become almost as great a libel upon Reason, as other sovereign deci-

^f Quis ignorat, ii, qui Mathematici vocantur, quanta in obscuritate rerum, & quam recondita in arte & multiplici subtilitate versentur? quo tamen in genere ita multi perfecti homines exstiterunt, ut nemo fere studuisse ei scientiæ vehementius videatur, quin, quod voluerit, secutus sit. De Orat. l. i.

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fions. I might appeal, for the truth of this, to those wonderful conclusions which *Geometers*, when condescending to write on History, Ethics, or Theology, have made from their premisses. But the thing is notorious: and it is now no secret that the oldest Mathematician in *England* is the worst Reasoner in it. But I would not be mistaken, as undervaluing the many useful discoveries made from time to time in moral matters by professed Mathematicians. Nor will any one so mistake me, who does not first confound the Genius and the Geometer; and then conclude that what was the atchievement of his Wit, was the product of his Theorems.

YET still it must be owned, that this discipline habituates the mind to think closely; and may help us to a good method of composition. In those most unpromising ages, when the *forms* of the Schools were as tedious and intricate, as the *matter* they treated, was absurd or trifling, it hath had force enough to break thro' the bondage of custom, and to clear away the thorns that then perplexed and overgrew the paths of learning. *Thomas Bradwardin*, a mathematician,

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matician, and Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in the fourteenth Century, in his famous book *De causa Dei*, hath treated his subject, not as it was wont to be handled in the Schools, but in the better method of the Geometers. And in another instance, of more importance, he hath given the age he lived in an example to emancipate itself from the slavery of fashion, I mean in his attempt (as by his freedom with the *Fathers* it seems to be) of reducing their *extravagant authority* to its just bounds. But yet, so true is the preceding observation, that tho' Mathematics, in good hands, could do this, it could do no more: All the opening it gave to Truth could not secure *Bradwardin* from the dishonour of becoming advocate for the most absurd opinion that ever was, the *Anti-Pelagian* Doctrine of St. *Austin*; in which the good archbishop was so much in earnest, that he calls the defence of it, *the Cause of God*.

To return. Such was the state and condition of the human understanding in the ancient World (rather a *mechanical* than a *moral* cultivation of reasoning) when CHRISTIANITY arose, and on such Principles as
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were best adapted to correct those very errors and prejudices, which had so long and so fatally retarded the progress of Truth. It would require a just volume to treat this matter as it deserves. The nature of my work will not allow me to enlarge upon it. I can only give a single instance, but it shall be an important one, namely the use of these principles in discovering the true *end* of man; and in directing him to the right *means* of attaining it.

THE knowledge of the ONE GOD, as the moral and immediate Governor of the Universe, directly leads us to the *supreme good*; and the doctrine of FAITH, as it inspires the *love of truth*, enables us to procure it.

IN the Pagan world, from which *God* was removed, the *end* was totally obscured by their perplexed disputes concerning the *supreme good*; and the *means*, quite lost in the various passions that had absorbed the *love of truth*.

THESE were the principles revealed by Heaven for the advancement of *moral knowledge*: and in God's good time they had

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their effect: tho' indeed somewhat with the latest. For it is not to be dissembled, that here, as in most other cases in the moral World, the perversity of Man soon ran counter to God's Providence; which had so admirably fitted and disposed things for a general reform.

THE first Preachers of the Gospel were the inspired Messengers of the Word. They committed its dictates to writing; and with that *Purity*, and consequently with that *Splendor*, in which they drew them from the fountain of Truth.

THEIR immediate followers, whom we call the *Apostolic Fathers*, received at their hands the Doctrine of Life, in all the simplicity of *Understanding* as well as *Heart*. It cannot be said their Writings do much honour to the rational sublimity of sacred Truth; but then they do not violate its integrity. For false philosophy had not yet made havock of the Faith, tho' it was then beginning to work. If, in their Writings, we see but little of that manly elegance of Reason, which makes the Scriptures so truly respectable, it must be allowed however, there is as little of those adulterate

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Ornaments, which their Successors brought from the brothels of Philosophy to adorn the sanctity of Religion: and let me add further, that tho' the early prospect of things may not be, in all respects, what one could wish; yet there is one circumstance, which does great credit to our holy Faith; It is this, That as the integrity and dignity of its simple and perfect nature refused all fellowship with the adulterate arts of Grecian learning; so the admirable display of divine Wisdom in disposing the parts, and conducting the course of the grand system of Redemption, was not to be tolerably apprehended but by an improved and well disciplined understanding. Both these qualities suited the nobility of its Original. It could bear no communion with *error*; and was as little fitted to consort with *ignorance*.

THE men of *Science* were not the first who attended to the call of the Gospel. It was not likely, they should be the first. Their station presented many prejudices against it. It was taught by simple and unlettered Men, whose condition they held in contempt; and it required that they who had been till now the *Teachers* of Mankind, should

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should become *Learners*. The Doctrines of the Gospel had indeed this to recommend them, that they were *rational*; but the Philosophers were already no strangers to those principles of natural Religion which Christianity adopted, such as the unity of the Godhead, his moral Government, and the essential difference between good and evil. The attestations to its Truth were *wonderful*; but these, their principles of false Philosophy enabled them to evade: so that their Passions and Prejudices, for some time, supported them in holding out against all the conviction of Gospel-Evidence.

BUT it was not so with plainer Men. They submitted to its force with less reluctance. Philosophy had secreted from them what it taught, of most reasonable, concerning God and his Attributes; so that the Religion which openly delivered these Truths, of such repose and comfort to the human mind, was embraced with eagerness. And as the Grecian Wisdom could not keep them from receiving the Truth when offered, so neither did that false science tempt them to vitiate it after they had received it, and were become the Preachers

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ers of it. They were apt indeed to fall into the other extreme, and (by considering of how little public use Philosophy had ever been to Mankind, and how violently it now opposed the new Religion which had mankind for its object) to neglect or avoid all human literature, without distinction. They saw, in the power of Miracles, a more efficacious way of propagating the Faith: and they thought they saw, in *St. Paul's* censure of the Grecian science, the condemnation of all human literature, in general. *St. Paul* had himself abstained from their meretricious Eloquence, and had cautioned posterity against their magical Philosophy. The *first*, lest it should occasion a suspicion that the Faith had made its way rather by the power of human speech, than by the word of the Spirit: The *latter*, because he saw it fatally framed to infect Religion; and had some experience, and more divine foresight, that it would speedily do so.

INDEED the time was at hand. For the convictive evidence, and rapid progress of the Gospel had so shaken and disconcerted Learned pride, that the next age saw
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a torrent of Believers pour in, from the Schools of their Rhetors, the Colleges of their Philosophers, and the Cloisters of their Priests. The sincerity of these illustrious Converts in embracing a Religion which did not hold out, so much as in distant prospect, any advantages of the temporal kind, cannot be fairly brought in question. Their discretion, their prudence, were the things wanting. But that passion of new Converts, *Zeal*, which is then least under the direction of *Knowledge* when it most needs it, hindered them from making their *advantages* of the principles of Revelation; so admirably fitted, as we have shewn, to improve human nature on that side where its perfection lies, I mean, in the high attainments of moral Truth. For, instead of reasoning from truths clearly revealed, and so, from things known, to advance, by due degrees, in the method of the mathematicians, to the discovery of truths unknown, They travestied obscure uncertainties, nay, manifest errors into truth; and sought in Philosophy and Logic analogies and quibbles to support them.

THEIR two great objects, as became them, were to increase the number of Believers;

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lievers ; and to defend the Faith against Infidels and Heretics.

AMONGST the means they employed for the speedy conversion of the World, one was to bring Christianity as near to the Genius of the *Gentile Religion*, and of the *Greek Philosophy*, as could be done with a safe conscience, and without offence. They thought it prudent to avail themselves of the prejudices of Paganism ; and perhaps they themselves were not free from all remains of those prejudices. The Jewish law, ill understood, satisfied them in the innocence of these means. They saw there, compliances made by God himself to the prejudices and superstitions of the times. But they did not see that a national Worship, instituted for peculiar and temporary ends, was to be conducted on different maxims from those of a Religion whose purity was erected on the universal principles of Spirit and Truth. They did not see that *one* mean was to be pursued when the end was to keep a chosen Family from the contagion of general Idolatry ; and *another*, when Idolaters were to be invited into the profession of an universal Faith.

THERE

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THERE were two things in Paganism, which, by exciting and keeping up the most amusing exercise of the mind, *Admiration*, did, more than any other, hold the people attached to Idolatry; and these were *mysterious Rites* and *hidden Doctrines*.

ONE would think it hard to find an equivalent for these in so simple and perfect a Religion as the Christian; yet the figurative expressions in the institution of the *last Supper*, and the frequent mention of *mysteries* in the Apostolic Writings, tho' it be of mysteries which the Genius of the Gospel had *revealed*, not of such as it had *invented*, gave occasion to accommodators to speak of the celebration of the *last Supper* as a hidden rite, to which they applied all the terms in use at the celebration of the Pagan Mysteries; and of the doctrine of *Redemption* as one of those sublime and occult Truths, which the fanatic *Platonists*, the fashionable sect of those times, boasted they had in trust, for the purification and perfection of human nature^g.

^g It may not be improper to observe, that *Platonism* was the Sect to which these Christian Fathers principally addicted themselves. Partly because it was then

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THIS mysterious Genius of Paganism, together with its popular absurdities, naturally and necessarily produced a method of

the Philosophy in fashion, and partly because (in consequence of that) several of them came from that School into the Church; but chiefly because they had entertained greater hopes of bringing over the Platonists to the Faith, which, as it was in the highest credit, would be a victory over Philosophy in general. What they seemed to ground their hopes upon was the sceptical disposition of that School as in its first institution. The soberer Platonists professed to seek Truth; and were not ashamed to own they could not find it. It was therefore imagined they would gladly receive it, in doctrines so rational, and so clearly revealed. But in this they were deceived: for Uncertainty is not the *state and condition* of the Sceptic's knowledge, but the *Principle and the Genius* of it: And it was departing from the fundamental laws of their profession to acknowledge any thing Certain. As for the enthusiastic part of this Sect, which was now daily getting ground, the *magic* to which they were so madly given kept them confined within its circle. This, and some manifest mischiefs, which even the warmest of the *Fathers* could not but perceive, made them ever and anon, when in ill humour, to execrate the Schools of *Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras*, &c. and denounce each of them, in their turns, to be the great nurseries of Heresy. But, falsely supposing that the evil arose from this or that particular Sect, when it had its root in the Genius of them all, they went on exclaiming against their *particular Doctrines*, and theologizing and reasoning on their *general Principles*.

teaching,

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teaching, which always pleases the imagination in proportion as it disgusts the understanding, that is to say, the method of *Allegory*. An art excellently fitted to *cover* the old nonsense of the *vulgar* Gentilism, and to *ornament* the new inventions of the *Philosophic*; but very abhorrent of the nature of Christianity, where every thing was rational, and every thing clear and open. Yet as Allegory was become the general Vehicle of instruction, and that which particularly distinguished the School of *Plato*, the *Fathers*, who leaned most towards that Sect, thought fit to accommodate themselves to the fashion. They allegorized every thing; and their success was such as might be expected from so absurd an expedient. Here, again, *Judaism*, misunderstood, supported them in their ill-judged schemes. For the *Law* is full of Allegories, and figurative representations. And with great propriety, as that Religion was dependent on, and preparatory to the *Gospel*: which, being its *end* and completion, required to have some idea of itself delineated in the *means*. But this, which shews Allegories to be reasonable in the *Old Testament*, shews the folly of expecting them in the *New*. For when the

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the substance was come in, and full light, the shadow was of course to be cast behind. Yet, by the most unaccountable perversity, the very reason which the Apostle gives for the necessity of interpreting the *Law* figuratively, that *the Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life*, was made the authority for using the *Gospel* in the same manner.

THUS much for a taste of their *Didactic* Theology. Their *Polemic* favoured as strongly of the same impure mixture. For the form of argument, and the matter of confutation, came from the same Shops: From the teaching *Rhetors* they learnt the art of reasoning by *similitudes* and *analogies*; from the talking *Orators*, that capital argument, the argument *ad hominem*; and from the wrangling *Philosophers*, such as the Academics, the address of *using any sort of Principles* to support their own opinions, or confute their adversaries'. The three eternal bars to the discovery and advancement of Truth.

BUT matters still grew from bad to worse; till one dark Cloud of Ignorance had overspread the Western World: this was fol-

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lowed by a Spiritual Dominion, which took advantage of the disorders occasioned by the continued inroads of savage spoilers, to strike its roots deep and wide in the fat and lumpish soil of Gothic Barbarism. For as a *Temporal* Tyranny maintains itself by corrupt *Manners*, so a *Spiritual* by corrupt *Doctrines*. And, as in large Empires subject to the former, the luxury of Vice runs into *delicacies*; so in those of the Latter, the absurdity of *Doctrines* converts itself into *Subtilties*. Hence the original of the SCHOOLMEN'S art; as we find it completed in the Peripatetic Code of *Sums* and *Sentences*. And this was in the order of things: what the fanatic visions of the *Platonic* Philosophy had brought into the Faith, it was but fit the *subtleties* of the *Aristotelian* should support. And it is observable, that the use which the *Schoolmen* made of their disputatious genius, was neither better nor worse than what the *Sophists* made before them. For triumphant Dulness commonly grows wanton in the exercise of imputed Wit. And the *Sic* and *Non* of *Peter Abelard* was now as famous as, aforetime, the *πρωτάριε* of *Gorgias*.

AT

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AT length Truth shot its ray into this Chaos of reason : but it came not directly from its Source ; but from the ferment of such Passions as error and corruption are apt to raise amongst those who govern in, and enjoy the benefit of, that state of confusion. For when a Reform happens to appear from within, it cannot be supposed to have its birth in a *love* of truth ; hardly, in the *knowledge* of it. Generally, some oblique Passion gratifies itself in decrying the grosser corruptions, supported by, and supporting, Those it hates. The Machine thus set a going, Truth has fair play : she is now at liberty to procure lovers, and to attach them to her service. This was the course of things in the revolution we are about to speak of ; and is the natural rise and progress of religious reformatations in general. For if, in the state of such established Error, Providence was to wait till a love of truth had set men upon breaking through their slavery, its Dispensations could never provide that timely aid to miserable Humanity, as we now find they almost always do. For when the corruption hath spread so wide, as to make Truth, if haply she could be found, an indifferent

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object

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object ; What is there left, to enable men to break their fetters but the clashing interests of the corruption itself ? And it is knowing as little of the *religious*, as of the *moral* course of God's Providence, to upbraid those, who have profited of the blessing, with the baseness of the Instruments that procured it.

HOWEVER, the love of Truth soon came in aid of Those, whom St. *Paul* himself would not discourage (such as *preach Christ even of envy and strife*) to carry on the work of Reformation. For though the *grossness* of the corruptions did not straitway make them suspected, yet, being tyrannically imposed, they soon became hated ; and that hatred brought on an enquiry, which ended not but in their detection. And then, Those, whose honesty and courage emboldened them to make a secession, found no way of supporting themselves in their new-recovered liberty, but by supplying their want of power with a superior share of knowledge.

To this every thing concurred. They were led, even by the spirit of opposition, to the fountain of Truth, the Scriptures ;
from

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from which they had been so long excluded. And the Scriptures, as we observed, had, amongst their other advantages, this peculiar virtue, to direct and enlarge the Mind, by providing it with such objects as were best suited for its contemplation ; and presenting them in such lights as most readily promoted its improvement by them. Such too was the gracious disposition of Heaven, that at the very time they were breaking up the recovered fountains of divine knowledge, the whole treasury of human learning was ready to be laid open to them. For a powerful Nation, of fierce Enthusiasts, the enemies of the Christian name, had just driven *Grecian* Literature from its native seats, and forced it to take refuge in the western parts of *Europe*.

How admirable are the ways of Providence ! and how illustrious was its present dispensation ! It directed the independent, various, and contrary Revolutions of *these* times, to rectify the mischiefs occasioned by the *past* : Whereby, the very Learning, which had in the first ages been employed to corrupt Christianity, now served to purify and restore it : The Philosophy, which

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was then adopted to explain articles of Faith, was now studied only to instruct us in the history of the human mind, and to assist us in developing its faculties, and regulating its proper operations : and those systems which had supported the whole body of school divinity, now afforded the principles proper to overturn it.

BUT in the course of this Reform, it was not enough that the bad Logic, on which the School-determinations rested, should be reduced to its just value. The service of Truth required the invention of a better. A better was invented ; and the superiority that followed its use was soon felt ; so that our adversaries were reduced to avail themselves of the same advantages. Thus true science opened and enlarged itself : It spread and penetrated through every quarter ; till it arrived to that distinguished condition in which we place the true glory of these later Ages.

THE advantage of the *modern* over *ancient* Times, in the successful pursuit of moral science, is now generally acknowledged. And the impartial Reader, who hath attended to these brief reflections, will
hardly

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hardly ascribe it to any other cause than to the *genius* and the *constitution* of the Christian religion ; whose *Doctrines* reveal the great Principles of moral truth ; and whose *Discipline* establishes a Ministry consecrated to the service of it.

It is true, indeed, the concurrence of several cross accidents had for many ages deprived the World of these advantages : They had defeated the natural virtue and efficacy of the *Doctrines* ; and rendered the *Discipline* vain and useless. For these two parts of the Christian system cannot act but in conjunction : separate them, and the one will abound in *enthusiasms*, and the other in *superstitions*. But now, since the cold and heavy load of *human inventions* hath been removed from the bosom of the *true faith*, the Ministers of Religion have been enabled to produce that fruit which, from the beginning, they were appointed to cultivate and mature.

To conclude : My more immediate purpose in these observations was to justify the FATHERS from the injurious contempt under which they now lye. I have said, the *Fathers* were at least equal, or rather superior

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perior to those Gentile writers, their contemporaries, whom we most admire : and I have explained the unhappy causes (in which *religion* and *reason* suffered equally, as they always will suffer together) why the *Fathers* did not, in the exactness of their *Logic*, and in the purity of their *Ethics*, infinitely surpass them. But, in the course of this Apology, I have endeavoured to serve a greater purpose ; which was, to vindicate our holy Religion from its supposed impotency and incapacity to direct and enlarge the reasoning faculties in the discovery and advancement of moral truth.

So far then as to the *genius and literary talents* of the *Fathers* : their *moral* character is a distinct consideration ; and would well deserve it. But I have already exceeded my limits. However, this I may venture to say, that the most prejudiced against them will never be able to prove, they had an *immoral* intention to deceiveⁱ. If there be any

ⁱ See a very sensible and ingenious Writer, the Reverend Mr. *Frederick Toll*, on this head, p. 88, & seq. who (distinct from the merits of the cause) has with uncommon abilities and candor *Defended the Free Enquiry* of Dr. *Middleton*.

learned

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learned man who thinks otherwise, I would advise him, before he attempts to make out this charge against them, to weigh well the force of the following Remark, though made on somewhat a different occasion.

“ Whenever (says the admirable author of
 “ the *Esprit des Loix*) one observes, in
 “ any age or government, the several Bo-
 “ dies in a Community intent on augment-
 “ ing their own authority, and vigilant to
 “ procure certain advantages to themselves
 “ exclusive of each other’s pretensions,
 “ should run a very great chance of being
 “ deceived if we regarded these attempts
 “ as a certain mark of their corruptions.
 “ By an unhappiness inseparable from the
 “ condition of humanity, Moderation is a
 “ rare virtue in Men of superior talents.
 “ And as it is always more easy to push on
 “ force in the direction in which it moves,

¹ Lorsque dans un Siècle, ou dans un Gouvernement, on voit les divers Corps de l’Etat chercher à augmenter leur Autorité, & à prendre les uns sur les autres de certains avantages, on se tromperoit souvent si l’on regardoit leurs entreprises, comme une marque certaine de leur Corruption. Par un malheur attaché à la condition humaine, les Grands-hommes modérés sont rares ; & comme il est toujours plus aisé de suivre sa

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“ than to stop or divert its moment ; per-
 “ haps, in the class of superior Geniuses,
 “ you will sooner find men extremely vir-
 “ tuous, than extremely prudent .”

force que de l'arrêter, peut-être dans la classe des Gens
 superieurs, est-il plus facile de trouver des Gens extre-
 mement vertueux, que des hommes extremement sages.
De Esprit des Loix, vol. ii. p. 334. octavo edit.

ERRATA.

Page xxii.	Line penult.	for <i>reasoning</i>	read <i>reason</i>
40.	Note ^m L. 3.	victo	victu
59.	y 14.	εἶπον	αἶτιον
162.	Line 21.	more	much
164.	13.	arise	arises

A
DISCOURSE

On the ATTEMPT of the
EMPEROR JULIAN

To rebuild the
TEMPLE of JERUSALEM.

IN considering the state of this new controversy, concerning MIRACLES, *two* things seemed to be wanting, as of use to oppose to the insinuations of licentious Readers, who are commonly more forward to come to a conclusion than the Disputants themselves: The *one* is, to shew that *all* the Miracles recorded in *Church-History*, are *not* forgeries or delusions: The *other*, that their evidence doth *not* stand on the same foot of credit with the Miracles recorded in *Gospel-History*. For most theological debates amongst Churchmen, notwithstanding their use to clear
up

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up and confirm the truth, are attended with this apparent evil, that the Enemies of religion draw their own consequences from them, how contrary soever to the express reasonings and declarations of the Parties concerned.

To obviate therefore the abuses arising from the management of the present question, I have taken upon me to *defend a Miracle of the fourth Century*; and to *enquire into the nature of that Evidence, which will demand the assent of every reasonable man to a miraculous fact.*

THE first part of this plan is prosecuted in the following sheets: The second, will afford a subject for another discourse.

MY chief purpose here is to prove the miraculous interposition of Providence, in defeating the attempt of JULIAN to rebuild the TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM.

As my design in writing is in behalf of our common Christianity, and not to support or to discredit the particular doctrines of this or that Church or Age; I have taken for my subject a Miracle worked by the immediate

mediate Agency of God, and not through the Ministry of his Servants.

So that, whether the power of miracles as exercised by the Apostles, and their first followers, ceased with them, or was conveyed to their successors of the next age, is a question that doth not at all affect the present subject: For, God's shortening the hands of his Servants doth not imply that he shortened his own.

SECTION I.

WHEN God, in his mercy, had decreed to restore mankind to the state of immortality forfeited by *Adam*, He saw fit, in order to preserve the memory of himself amidst a world running headlong into Idolatry, to select a single Family, which, advanced into a Nation, might, in the interim, become the repository of his holy Name. To this purpose he took the Seed of *Abraham*, in reward of the virtues of their forefathers: and, in due time, brought them, by Leaders chosen from amongst themselves, to the Land he had appointed for them.

B

IN

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IN compliance with the religious notions of those times, he condescended, when he communicated himself as the Maker and Governor of the Universe, to adopt them for his peculiar People, under the idea of their *tutelar Deity*, or the God of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. And, the better to secure the great end of their separation, assumed likewise the title and office of their *King*, or civil Governor.

HENCE their Religion came under the idea of a *Law*; and was so considered and denominated. And their Law was, in the strictest sense, *Religion*, as having all the functions of a divine command.

IN a word, those two great Rules of human conduct, which are, elsewhere, kept so distinct by their different originals, and different administrations, were, Here, by the sameness of both, specifically lost in a perfect incorporation. And the whole œconomy (as every thing in this dispensation was relative to the *Jews* as a body) went under the common name of *LAW*.

FROM this account of the *Jewish* Constitution, it follows, That Religion, which, elsewhere,

elsewhere, hath only *particulars* for its subjects, had, Here, the nation or *community* : And what, elsewhere, as far as concerns the divinity of religion, is only a *private* matter, was, Here, a *public* : For the Deity being both their tutelary God and civil Governor, the proper object of his care, in each capacity, was the collective Body : And, whether we consider the observance due to him under the idea of Law or Religion, it was still the *body* which was the proper subject of it. Not but that Religion had there a *private* part, or *particulars* for its subject : But then it was that Religion we call *natural* ; founded in what reason discovers of the relation between the creator and the Creature ; an aid, which Revelation is so far from rejecting, that we find it constitutes the ground of every extraordinary Dispensation vouchsafed by God to mankind. For, *he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*^a.

FROM this account of the *Hebrew* Government, one natural consequence ariseth, That the principal Rites of their *religion*

^a Heb. xi. 6.

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and *law* were to be performed and celebrated in some determined Place. This, the object and subject of their *ceremonial* seemed equally to require. For, the ideas of tutelary God and King implied a Local residence : And a national act, created by the relations arising from them, required a fixed and certain place for its celebration : And both together seemed to mark out the Capital of the Country for that purpose.

THIS consequent practice, which the nature and reason of things so evidently point out, the Institutes of the *Hebrew* Constitution expressly order and enjoin. During the early and unsettled times of the *Jewish* State, the Sacrifices, prescribed by their Ritual, were directed to be offered up before the door of an ambulatory Tabernacle : But when they had gained the establishment decreed for them, and a magnificent Temple was erected for religious worship, then all their Sacrifices were to be offered at *Jerusalem* only.

Now, Sacrifices constituting the substance of their national Worship, their Religion could not be said to subsist longer than the continuance of that Celebration. But sacrifices could be performed only in one appointed

pointed Temple : So that, when this was finally destroyed, the Institution itself became abolished.

NOR was any thing more consonant to the *nature* of this religion, than the assigning such a celebration of its Rites. The Temple would exist while they remained a People, and continued sovereign : And when they ceased to be such, they would indeed lose their Temple, but then they had no further occasion for it ; because the Rites there celebrated were relative to them, only as a civil politicd Nation.

THESE consequences are all so necessarily connected, and clearly understood, that when *Jesus* informs the woman of *Samaria* of the approaching abolition of the Law of *Moses*, he expresses himself by this circumstance, that men should *no longer worship at the Temple of Jerusalem*^b.

IF, from the *nature* of this religion, we go on to consider its *end*, we shall find, in it, all the marks of a Religion, preparatory and introductory to another more complete and perfect ; of which it contains the rudiments,

^b John iv. 21.

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and presents the shadow. Such as the confining its fundamental doctrine, the worship of the true God, within the limits of one small Country. Such again, as its multifarious and enigmatic Ritual; of which no reasonable account can be had, but that part was instituted to oppose the reigning superstitions, in order to preserve the Separation; and part to prefigure, by types or symbols, the essential circumstances of some future Dispensation.

BUT Christianity, which established its pretensions by the power of miracles and the purity of doctrine, doth in fact support these conclusions, by representing Judaism as only the rudiments and shadow of its own more complete œconomy.

THIS being premised, we say, that the more perfect Dispensation could not take place till the less perfect, which prefigured it, and prepared its way, was set aside and abolished.

BUT now, If the mere voluntary adherence to a Religion were enough to prevent its abolition, the perverseness and obstinacy of man are such, that they might,
and,

and, in fact, would lie in the way, and obstruct the purposes of Providence.

THEREFORE has the great Disposer of all things so divinely constituted this preparatory Religion, as to put it out of the power of human perversity even to delay or retard its destined abolition ; by so constituting the natures, and disposing the order of his Dispensations, that those essential Rites, which made the *Jewish* religion to be what it was, should of necessity require a fixed local celebration, which it was not possible to perform longer than while the *Jewish* People continued a Nation, and in possession of the sovereignty of *Palestine*. St. *Chrysostom* has an elegant observation to this purpose :
 “ From the necessity (says he) of a local
 “ worship, God covertly withdrew the
 “ *Jews* from the rage of ritual observances.
 “ For as a physician, by breaking the cup,
 “ prevents his patient from indulging his
 “ appetite in a hurtful draught ; so God
 “ with-held them from their sacrifices, by
 “ destroying the City itself, and making the
 “ place inaccessible to all of them .”

Ἐξ τῆς κατὰ τὸν τόπον ἀνάγκης λαμβανόντως
 αὐτὸς ἀπήγαγε, τῆς περὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα μανίας—ὥσπερ

IT may not be improper, in this place, to take notice of an objection, though indeed it be already obviated. It is, "that the sacrificing at *Jerusalem* being a mere ceremony, we can hardly conceive how the want of it should annihilate the whole system of a religious Institution." The objection goes upon ideas foreign to the subject. The *essence* of the *Jewish* religion was *ceremonial*. Hence it is, that there is no word in the *Hebrew* language that signifies what we mean by *ceremonies*: nor, if what we have delivered, concerning the nature and genius of the *Jewish* religion be true, could there be any such. The same is observable in the *Greek* language. And the reason is the same. It hath been shewn elsewhere ^d, that this nature was common both to the *Jewish* and *Greek* Religions; rational indeed, in the former; but altogether absurd in the other. Yet it will be said, the *Romans* had a word to express *ceremonies*. It is true,

ἐν ᾧ Ἰατρὸς ἰσησι τῆς ἀκαίρου ψυχροποσίας ἢ ἄρρωσαν,
τὸ ζεῦσθαι ἀφανίσας, ἔγωγε καὶ ὁ Θεὸς τῶν θυσιῶν ἀπή-
γαγε, τιμὴν πόλιν αὐτῷ καθελὼν, καὶ ποιήσας αὐτῷ
ἄβυσσον πάντων. Homil. VI. advers. Jud.

^d *Div. Leg.*

they

they had. And the occasion of having it will shew, why the *Jews* and *Greeks* had it not. Their Lawgiver, *Numa*, instituted a kind of system of *natural* Religion for their *national* use ; which, time and craft soon corrupted with gross idolatries. So that as superstitions accumulated, they would be under a necessity of inventing a word to signify that specific mode of worship, through which such superstitions were conveyed.

THUS Judaism being of necessity to cease on the establishment of Christianity, we see for what reason it was predicted, that when *Shiloh* came, *the sceptre should depart from Judah*. Admirable are the ways of Providence ! and so will they be always found, whenever we happen upon the clue, that leads us to the right opening.

IF then, from the nature of things, it doth appear, that the TEMPLE WORSHIP must fall with the rise of that which is *in spirit and in truth* ; and that the abolition of the *Mosaic* Law is essential to the establishment of the Gospel ; we cannot but conclude, that a matter of this importance (so illustrious a proof of the relation and dependance between these two Religions !) must be predicted,

dicted, both by the Prophets of the *old*, and the Founder of the *new* Dispensation.

THEY Both, indeed, have done it. And fully to comprehend the force and just value of their expressions was the end for which we have here deduced things from their original, and given this general view of the course and order of God's moral œconomy; on which, the sense of the prophecies relating to it must needs be determined: And without which, the several predictions of the destruction of the Temple, expressed in general terms, would be subject to cavil, as, in themselves, implying only a *total*, and not a *final* subversion. Whereas now, from the nature of the Dispensations, we understand that a destruction, thus foretold, necessarily implied a *final* one.

THE prophet *Isaiab*, predicting, as usual, the triumphs of the Gospel under the terms of a temporal deliverance of the *Jews* from their hostile neighbours, delivers himself in the following words: “ And in this mountain [*viz.* of *Zion*] shall the Lord of
“ Hosts make *unto all People* a feast of fat
“ things, a feast of wines on the lees, of
“ fat things full of marrow, of wines on
I “ the

“ the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain *the face of the covering cast over all People, and the veil that is spread over all nations.* He will *swallow up death in victory*^d.” And to shew, that some great event in a remote and future age was the principal object of his prophecy, he introduces it with this song of triumph ; “ O Lord, thou art my God, I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name ; for thou hast done wonderful things ; *thy counsels of old are Faithfulness and Truth*^e.” *i. e.* What thou hast originally decreed, thou wilt, in the latter ages, bring to pass. Therefore having, in the *sixth* verse, enigmatically described that salvation which should arise from mount *Zion* ; in the *seventh*, he more openly intimates the abolition of the Temple-worship, by the figure of destroying that *veil*, which, at the crucifixion of the Lord of life, the Evangelist informs us, *was rent in twain from the top to the bottom* ; called by the Prophet, from the confined nature of the *Jewish* religion, the veil that hid truth from the nations. In this sense *St. Paul* appears to have understood the prophecy ; for he

^d Ch. xxv. γ 6, 7, 8.

^e Isa. xxv. 1.

applies

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applies the concluding words to the last triumph of Christ over *Death*^f.

CONFORMABLY to these ideas, *Jesus* says to the woman of *Samaria*,—" Believe me, " the hour cometh, when ye shall neither " in this mountain, nor yet at *Jerusalem*, " worship the Father. — But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and " in truth^g." And to secure the honour of this great event, Providence had decreed that the City and Temple of *Jerusalem* should be destroyed ; of which the Angel informs *Daniel* in the following words : " And after " threescore and two weeks shall Messiah " be cut off, but not for himself ; and the " people of the prince that shall come shall " destroy the *City* and the *Sanctuary* ; and " the end thereof shall be with a flood, and " unto the end of the war *desolations* are " determined. And he shall confirm the " covenant with many for one week : And " in the midst of the week he shall cause the " sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the " overspreading of *abominations*, he shall " make it *desolate*, even until the consum-

^f 1 Cor. xv. § 54.

^g John iv. 21—23.

" mation,

“mation, and that determined shall be
 “poured upon the desolate^h.” In which
 we see a plain and circumstantial description
 of the overthrow of the City and Temple
 by the *Romans* under *Titus*. *Jesus* foretells
 the then approaching event in the follow-
 ing manner: “And when *Jesus* was come
 “near, he beheld the *City*, and wept over
 “it, saying—The days shall come upon
 “thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench
 “about thee, and compass thee round, and
 “keep thee in on every side, and shall lay
 “thee even with the ground, and thy chil-
 “dren within thee; and they shall not
 “leave in thee one stone upon anotherⁱ,”
 Two other evangelists^k inform us, that
 “*Jesus* went out, and departed from the
 “*Temple*; and his disciples came to him
 “for to shew him the buildings of the tem-
 “ple. And *Jesus* said unto them, See ye
 “not all these things? Verily, I say unto
 “you, There shall not be left here one
 “stone upon another, that shall not be
 “thrown down.” And when the disciples
 privately asked him *when these things should*
be, he answered, *When ye shall see the abq-*

^h Dan. ix. 26, 27.

ⁱ Luke xix. 41, 43, 44.

^k Matt. xxiv. 1, 2. 15. Mark xiii. 1, 2. 14.

mination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place; referring to the prophecy quoted above. Hitherto we see a total destruction indefinitely predicted. The following passage of St. Luke's Gospel marks the fixed duration of it. "And Jerusalem (says Jesus) shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled¹." But, of the period here meant, commentators differ: Some, as *Hammond*, suppose it reaches no lower than till the empire became Christian: others, as *Dr. S. Clarke*, that it extends to the future conversion of the *Jews*.

AMIDST this uncertainty, arising from the general expressions of these prophecies considered alone, the only way of coming to the truth, *i. e.* to know whether they mean a *final* destruction, or, if not, what sort of restoration; and when it is to succeed; the only way, I say, is to recur to what hath been discoursed above, concerning the *nature* of the TWO DISPENSATIONS: In which we have shewn, that *Christianity* and the *Temple-worship* cannot subsist together:

¹ Luke xxi. 24.

And so must conclude, that these Prophecies foretell not only the *total*, but the *final* destruction of the *Jewish* Temple.

AND now, What are we to conclude from all this, to the case in hand?—It is evident, a *repugnancy* in the co-existence of Judaism and Christianity, would require God's interposition to prevent the restoration of the Temple : it is as evident, a *Prophecy* of its *final* destruction would do the same. *Either* of these facts therefore being sufficient to establish our point, so much discourse had not been employed on *Both*, had they stood independent of one another. But the *Prophecies* being *so* delivered, as to be, of themselves, ambiguous, there was a necessity of calling-in the *nature* of God's Dispensations, to explain their precise meaning ; which would, then, reciprocally support what we infer from the different *genius* of the two Religions.

IF it be asked (as there is now no secret in the counsels of God but what audacious man will demand a reason of) “ Why the *final* destruction of the Temple was so doubtfully delivered, that there was need of our having recourse to the nature and genius of the two Dispensations, to comprehend the
full

full meaning of the Prophecy;" I answer, in general, that it seems very irreverent, when God hath clearly made known his Will to us, to cavil with his Wisdom, for not doing it in that way which to us may seem the most direct and simple. But, in this case it happens, we see great *ends* obtained, by the very *way* he hath been pleased to use. For by obliging us to have recourse to the nature of his *Dispensations*, in order to ascertain the full meaning of his *Prophecies*, he hath put us under the necessity of having always in view a circumstance of great moment, which we might otherwise be apt to forget; a circumstance which impresseth on us the strongest ideas of the divine wisdom. Had the abolition of Judaism, on the establishment of Christianity, been only *expedient*, and not *necessary*, as even in that case we may be assured it had been in God's counsel never to suffer the Temple to be rebuilt, so we may well believe that the revelation of this counsel by Prophecy, had been in the express terms of a *final* destruction; because, from the *expediency* only of an abolition, general terms could never lead us to conclude the predicted destruction to be *final*. But now as the abolition was *necessary*, that alone would suffice to fix the precise meaning of
general

general terms. And as the use of general terms would oblige us to have recourse to those circumstances on which the necessity was founded, and the constant view of those circumstances is highly useful for religious purposes, therefore were general terms very wisely employed.

It may perhaps be further objected, "That the reasons here given for the necessity of abolishing Judaism, on the coming of Christianity, reach no further than to a *virtual* abolition: whereas it is an *actual* abolition only that can serve our purpose."

To this I reply, That the abolition of a preparatory Religion, on the appearance of that which was to follow, is not a matter of every day's experience. There is but this one instance in the world, and never will be another. Let us divest ourselves, therefore, of all those common notions we form from analogies, and we shall see that reason leads us to expect an *actual* abolition. Indeed, according to our ideas of the general nature of Religion, an *actual* abolition could not be certainly had, without a force upon free-will; hence, in such cases, a *virtual* abolition is all we are to expect: and, from a consideration of the general nature of religion, we are

misled into this objection. But the Religion in question was of a peculiar kind. The *essential part* of it was a *local worship*. This might be *actually* abolished without any force upon the will. When therefore an abolition was *foretold*, and the *necessity* of it seen, must we not conclude such a one to be meant? On the whole, A *virtual* abolition of *circumcision, purification, distinction of meats, &c.* which belong to the *private part* of the *Jewish* religion, was all that could be expected: but the nature of things seems to require an *actual* abolition of the *public part*, which was the *Temple-worship*. To these many other reasons might be added, Such as the apparent necessity of shewing, that this nation was no longer God's *peculiar*; which could hardly be done while they were in possession of a worship, that was the characteristic mark of God's *peculiarity*: And such as the transferring the kingship of the *Jews* from God to *Christ*; which would not appear to be done while the Temple-worship, the specific act of allegiance, was in being. There are various considerations besides of equal weight. But we may seem perhaps to have already exceeded the proportion that the parts of this Discourse should bear to one another.

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THUS much, therefore, being premised, we enter directly on our Subject ; it being now seen, that the truth of Christianity must stand or fall with the ruin or the restoration of the Temple at *Jerusalem* ; for if that Temple should be rebuilt for the purpose of *Jewish* worship, Christianity could not support its pretensions ; nor the *Prophets*, nor *Jesus*, the truth of their predictions.

THERE was a time when the *Powers of this world* were all opposed to the progress of the *Gospel* ; and continued thus opposed for some Ages. So that it would have been a miracle, as rare as most of those by which it was supported, if, amongst the various attempts to suppress and discredit it, there had not been a project formed to give the lye to those Prophecies which denounced ruin and desolation to the *Jewish Temple*.

THE first attempt upon Christianity was such as was most natural to this *Power*, The suppressing it by brutal force. And the subjection of the whole civilized World to the despotic Will of one blind Persecutor, gave that force its utmost moment. The violence of its effort was TEN times repeated ; and, as often, by the blood of the martyrs, victoriously repelled.

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THOUGH this may be justly reckoned amongst the marks of its divinity, yet it must be owned, that brutal force was not the most artful or dangerous way of procuring the ruin even of what they thought it, a mere human contrivance. The utmost which force can do (and that, it often fails in) is to stop the progress of a Profession : while the same advantages of Power, employed towards a rational conviction of its falsehood, proceed more fatally to its ruin. But this method of attack required a comprehensive knowledge of human Nature, and of the Doctrines to be suppressed.

FEW of the persecuting Emperors had either. *M. Antoninus* had the one ; *Julian* only, who closed the scene, had both. Till his time, the sole engine was simple force. *Antonine* himself used no other. And yet his knowledge of men might have shewn him the folly of so unmanly a proceeding. But then he knew no more of Christianity than the most ignorant of his Courtiers. Philosophy, which should have led him to enquire into a Religion that all were running eagerly to embrace, was the very thing that restrained his curiosity. For *Stoical* pride (of which sect he was)
would

would confess no need of the knowledge of falsehood to perfect its followers in truth : It despised the oblique genius of the *Academy*, which made all truth to depend on the knowledge and detection of falsehood.

JULIAN was the first who got enough acquainted with the Gospel to apply such arms against it as must have ended in its destruction, had it been nothing more than what he affected to think it, a human invention. And here we shall be forced to confess, that Providence seems to have raised up this extraordinary man on set purpose to do the last honours to the Religion of *Jesus* ; to shew the world what *human power*, with all its advantages united, was able to oppose to its establishment. For we find in this Emperor all the great qualities that a Projector could conceive, or an Adversary would require, to secure success to so daring an opposition. He was eloquent and liberal ; artful, insinuating, and indefatigable ; which, joined to a severe temperance, an affected love of justice, and a courage superior to all trials, first gained him the affections, and, soon after, the peaceable possession of the whole Empire.

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HE was bred up in the Christian religion from his infancy : and was obliged to profess it (or at least to disguise his passion^m for Paganism) to the time he assumed the purple. His aversion to his uncle *Constantine*, and his cousin *Constantius*, for the cruelties exercised on his family, had prejudiced him against the Christian religion : And his attachment to some *Platonic* Sophists, who had been employed in his education, gave him as violent a bias towards Paganism. He was ambitious ; and Paganism, in some of its Thëurgic rites, had flattered and encouraged his views of the Diadem : He was vain, which made him aspire to the glory of re-establishing the ancient Rites : He was extremely knowing, and fond of *Grecian* literature ; the very soul of which, in his opinionⁿ, was the old Theology : But above all, notwithstanding a considerable mixture of enthusiasm, his Superstition was excessive, and what nothing, but the blood of *Hecatombs*, could appease.

^m A rudimentis pueritiæ primis inclinatio erat erga numinum cultum, paullatimque adulescens desiderio rei flagrabat. Am. Marc. l. xxii. c. 5.

ⁿ Vid. Ep. Jul. xlii.

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WITH these dispositions he came to the Empire ; and, consequently, with a determined purpose of subverting the Christian, and restoring the Pagan Worship. His predecessors had left him the repeated experience of the inefficacy of downright force. The *virtue* of the *past* times still rendered this effort fruitless ; the *numbers* of the *present* would have made it dangerous. He found it necessary therefore to change his ground : His knowledge of human Nature furnished him with arms ; and his knowledge of the Faith he had abandoned, enabled him to direct those arms to most advantage.

HE began with re-establishing Paganism by Law °, and granting a full liberty of conscience to the Christians. On this principle, he restored those to their civil rights, of what party soever, who had been banished on account of Religion : and even affected to reconcile, to a mutual forbearance, the various sects of Christianity. Yet notwithstanding, his own Historian assures us, he put on this mask of moderation and

° Planis absolutisque decretis aperiri templa, arisque hostias admoveri ad deorum statuit cultum. Am. Mar. l. xxii. c. 5.

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equity, for no other purpose than to inflame the dissensions in the Church °. And his subsequent conduct fully justifies the historian's observation.

HE then fined and banished ^p such of the more popular Clergy as had abused their power, either in exciting the People to burn and destroy pagan Temples ; or to commit violence on an opposite Sect. And it cannot be denied, but that their turbulent and insolent manners deserved all the severity of his justice ^q.

HE proceeded to revoke and take away those immunities, honours, and revenues ^r, which his uncle and cousin had granted to

° Utque dispositorum roboraret effectum, dissidentes Christianorum antistites cum plebe discissa in palatium intromissos monebat, ut, civilibus discordiis consopitis, quisque, nullo vetante, religioni suæ serviret intrepidus. Quod agebat ideo obstinate, ut dissensiones, augente licentia, non timeret unanimantem postea plebem. *Idem* ib.

^p Nazianz. Orat. i. cont. Jul.

^q See the learned and respectable Mr. Archdeacon Law's very ingenious Discourse, of the several Dispensations of revealed Religion, p. 174, 1st Edit.

^r Κληρικους μέντοι, πᾶσαν αἰτέλειαν ἢ τιμὴν ἢ τὰ σιτηρέσια ἀφείλετο Κωνσταντῖος [Κωνσταντῖνος Val.] Soz. l. v. c. 5.

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the Clergy. Neither was his pretence for this altogether unreasonable. He judged the grants to be exorbitant; and besides, as they were attendant on a *national Religion*, when the *establishment* came to be transferred from Christianity to Paganism, he concluded, they must follow the Religion of the State. But there was one immunity he took away, which no good policy, even under an establishment, should have granted them; which was an exemption^s from the civil *Tribunals*.

THE Apostate went still further; he disqualified the christian Laity for bearing office in the State: and even this, the security of the established Religion may often require.

BUT his most illiberal treatment of the Christians, was his forbidding the Professors, who were of that Religion, to teach *Humanity* and the sciences, in the public Schools. His more immediate design, in this, was to hinder the Youth from taking impressions to the disadvantage of Pa-

^s Τοῖς βασιλευμένοις ἀπεδῶκε. Soz. l. v. c. 5.

ganism;

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ganism: His remoter view, to deprive Christianity of the support of human literature^t.

^t This Edict is to be found amongst the works of *Julian*; and goes under the name of his xlii^d Epistle. It forbids the Christian Professors to *teach* human literature. But because the Ancients, such as *Gregory Naz. Socrates, Sozomene, Theodoret, and Rufinus* expressly say, that he forbad Christians to *learn* it; some modern critics have embarrassed themselves in according this imaginary difference. *Baronius, and Valesius*, who could not find it was forbid, by this Edict, to *learn*, concluded there was no such prohibition. *Tillemont* and *Fleuri* will not allow the Fathers to be mistaken; and therefore imagine there was another Edict, which extended the prohibition to the case in question. *Tillemont* supposes this the more readily, because he thinks the xlii^d letter is indefinite and obscure. It appears to me very clear and precise; and it seems strange none of these critics saw, that, as this prohibition is circumstanced in the Edict, the not being allowed to *learn* was the necessary consequence of being forbid to *teach*. For the Professors are not only disallowed to explain Pagan authors to Pagan auditories, but to *Christian* likewise; as appears from the following words, *But if they* [the Christian Professors] *think these authors give a false and unworthy account of the tremendous majesty of the Immortals, let them go and explain Matthew and Luke in the churches of the Galileans.* εἰ δὲ εἰς τὰς τιμιωτάτας ὑπολαμβάνουσι πεπλανῆσθαι, βαδίζόντων εἰς τὰς τῶν Γαλιλαίων ἐκκλησίας, ἐξηγησόμενοι Ματθαῖον ἢ Λουκᾶν. But why was this said, if they were at liberty to teach the

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NOT content with this, he endeavoured even to destroy what was already written in

Christian youth the sciences? If they were not, Where could they go for instruction but to the schools of the pagan Professors? Hither, indeed, they are invited by the Edict itself. *Those of the [Christian] youth* (says Julian) *who are desirous of frequenting [the schools of the Pagan professors] are by no means to be excluded.* Ὁ βελλόμενος τῶν νέων φοιτᾶν, ἐκ ἀποκλείσαι. This was kind: but would by no means be accepted. Here the bait was half off the hook; and discovered, that to draw them thither was one end of the Edict: which he imagined would necessarily reduce things to this state, either to dispose the *Galileans*, during their youth, in favour of Paganism; or to disable them, in their adult age, to defend Christianity. So that it appears, from hence, his forbidding Christian professors to explain Pagan writers to any audience whatsoever, fully amounted to a prohibition of *learning* them. The Fathers, we see, did not scruple directly to affirm it. And that they believed it, appears from their finding no other way of avoiding the dilemma of *corruption*, or *ignorance*, than by composing Epic poems, Tragedies, and other classic compositions upon a Christian plan, and on subjects taken from sacred story. This circumstance (had *Baronius* and *Valesius* attended to it) was alone sufficient to shew them, that the Fathers have told us no more than what they saw and felt, when they said, that *Julian* forbid them to *learn* human literature, as well as to *teach* it. Let me add, that nothing but this interpretation of his Edict can account for the severe censure
defence

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defence of Christianity. With this view he wrote to *Ecdicius* the governor of *Egypt*, and to *Porphry* the treasurer-general, to collect up, and send to him the library^u of *George* bishop of *Alexandria*, who for his cruelty and tyranny had been torn in pieces by the People.

NAY, to such a length did his *aversion* to the name of CHRIST carry him, as to decree, by a public Edict, that his followers should be no longer called Christians, but *Galileans*^w. Not but there might be a mixture of *policy* in it too, as knowing the efficacy of a *nick-name* to render a profession ridiculous. However, it is more than probable, *superstition* had its share in this ridi-

which his own Historian, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, passes upon it, in the following words, “ illud autem erat inclemens, obruendum perenni silentio, quod arcebat docere Magistros Rhetoricos & Grammaticos, ritus Christiani cultores.” Lib. xxii. c. 10.

^u Ep. ix. and xxxvi.—πολλὰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν φιλόσοφα παρ' αὐτῶ, πολλὰ δὲ ῥητορικά, πολλὰ δὲ ἦν καὶ τῆς τῶν εὐσεβῶν Γαλιλαίων διδασκαλίας, ἃ βελοίμην μὲν ἡφανίσθαι πάντῃ. Ep. ix.

^w Γαλιλαίης ἀντὶ χριστιανῶν ὀνομάσας τε καὶ καλεῖσθαι νομοθετήσας. Greg. Naz. Orat. ii. cont. Jul.

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culous Edict. The fanatic Platonists, to whom *Julian* had entirely given himself up, were much besotted with the mysterious *power of Names*. These having been struck with the wonders performed by the name of *Christ*, and finding so many difficulties oppose themselves to their Master's exterminating scheme, might well fancy there was a certain *Charm* in the Word *Christian*, which rendered the Religion, so denominated, invincible. And this seems to be the ground *Gregory Naz.* went upon (if he had any) for saying, that the reason of this extraordinary Law was, because the *Demons* trembled at the name of *Christ*, and suffered torments as often as they heard it pronounced.

A MAN so transported by a train of the most ungoverned passions, we may well think, would stop at no means, how low and vile soever, to carry on his project. His Letters supply us with an instance of one so dishonourable, that no testimony but his own could make it credible. *Titus*, bishop of *Bostra*, and his Clergy, in an address presented to *Julian*, acquaint him with their care in keeping the flock committed to them
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(then equal in number to the Pagans) in due obedience to the laws. The return *Julian* makes for this act of duty is to acquaint the people of *Bosra*, that their bishop was become their delator ; that he had represented them as prone to sedition, and even capable of the last excesses, but that he and his Clergy kept them in order. For this crime, therefore, which he calls the taking to himself the merit of the People's good behaviour, he advises them to expel the Bishop from their city^x.

AFTER this, no instance of baseness or injustice will be thought strange. On pretence that the Arian church of *Edeffa* was too rich, and had not used the *Valentinians* with temper, he seized on every thing belonging to it, and divided the plunder amongst his soldiers. And, to add the bitterness of contumely to his injustice, he told them he did it to

^x Ep. lii. Βοσρηνοῖς. It is remarkable, that the Author of the *Characteristics*, in his *third Vol. of Misc. Ref.* hath given his reader a translation of this Letter, for a pattern, as he tells us, of the humour and genius, of the principle and sentiments, of this virtuous, gallant, generous and mild Emperor, p. 87, & seq. 4th Ed. It is true, he hath dropt the affair of *Titus*, their Bishop, in his Translation.

ease them of their burthens, that they might proceed more lightly, and with less impediment in their journey to Heaven ^y.

BUT *Socrates*, the Historian, tells us, that he imposed a tax or tribute, proportioned to every man's circumstances, on all who would not sacrifice ^z. This was persecution in form : And yet he did not stop here ; but proceeded to still greater extremities.

THOUGH he did not persecute to death by Laws, that being directly contrary to his Edicts of toleration, which he had with so much vanity and frequency repeated ; yet he connived at the *fury* of the People, and the *brutality* of the Governors of provinces ; who, during his short reign, brought many martyrs to the stake. For he put such into Governments, whose inhumanity and blind zeal for their country-superstitions were most distinguished. And when the suffering Churches presented their complaints to him, he dismissed them with cruel scoffs ; telling them ^a, their Religion directed them

^y Ep. xliii. Εκητόλω. ^z Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 13.

^a Greg. Naz. i. Orat. cont. Jul. Socrat. Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 14.

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to suffer without murmuring. So that we have little reason to doubt what the Ancients say of his declared intention (had he returned victorious from the *Persian* war) to subject the whole Christian world to the honestest persecution of fire and sword ^b.

THESE were the efforts of the Emperor *Julian* to subvert Christianity. However he took care to avoid the absurdity of our modern Apostates, who are for abolishing the Faith in which, like him, they have been bred, without substituting any other Religion in its stead. *Julian's* attempts to destroy Christianity did not precede, but went hand in hand with, his projects to support and reform Paganism.

HE wrote and he *preached* in person, in defence of Gentile superstition: and has him-

^b Gr. Naz. ii. Orat. contr. Jul. Ruff. Eccl. Hist. l. i. c. 36. How well all this agrees with what the Author of the *Characteristics* says of *Julian*, in the following words, I need not say [*Julian*] *was a great restrainer of Persecution, and would allow of nothing further than a Resumption of Church-lands and publick Schools; without any attempt on the goods or persons, even of those who branded the State-Religion, and made a merit of affronting the public Worship.* Vol. I. p. 25. 4th Edit.

self acquainted us with the ill success of his Ministry^c. Of his controversial writings, his answerer *Cyril* hath given us a large specimen; by which we see he was equally intent to recommend Paganism and to discredit Revelation.

HIS reformation of gentile Superstition turned upon these points, 1. To hide the absurdity of its traditions by moral and philosophic allegories^d. These he found provided for him, principally, by philosophers of his own sect, the Platonists. For they, not without the assistance of the other sects of Theists, had, ever since the appearance of Christianity, been refining the Theology of paganism, to oppose it to that of Revelation; under pretence, That their new invented allegories were the ancient *spirit* of the *letter*, which the first poetical divines had thus convey'd to posterity. A noble

^c — εἰς τὴν Βέρροϊαν ἐπορευόμεν — Διελέχθην δὲ ὀλίγα τῇ βελῇ περὶ Θεοσεβείας, ἀλλὰ τὰς λόγους ἐπήνην μὲν ἅπαντες. ἐπεύθησαν δὲ αὐτοῖς ὀλίγοι πάνυ, καὶ ἔτοι οἱ ἢ πρὸ τῶν ἐμῶν λόγων ἐδόκην ἔχειν ὑγιῶς, ἐλά-
βοντο δὲ ὥσπερ παρρησίας ἀπολείψασθαι τὴν αἰδῶ καὶ ἀποθέσθαι. Ep. xxvii. Λιβανίου Ῥοφιστῆ.

^d See his Discourse compos'd in honour of the Mother of the gods.

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design! of which some *Letters*, lately published, *concerning Mythology*, will give the reader a very tolerable idea.

2. HE then attempted to correct the morals of the *Pagan* priesthood, and regulate their manners on the practice of the first *Christians*. In his Epistle to *Arsacius*, he not only requires of them a personal behaviour void of offence; but that they reform their household on the same principle: He directs that they who attend at the altar should abstain from the theatre, the tavern, and the exercise of all ignoble professions: That in their private character they be meek and humble; but that, in the acts and offices of religion, they assume a character conformable to the majesty of the immortal Gods whose ministers they are. But above all he recommends to them the virtues of charity and benevolence^c.

WITH regard to Discipline and Religious policy, *Naxianzene* and *Sozomene* tell us, he established Readers in Divinity; directed the order and parts of the divine offices; con-

^c Ep. xlix. Ἀρεσάνιῳ ἀρχιερεῖ Γαλατίας. Fragmentum Orationis Epistolæve.

stituted a regular and formal service, with days and hours of worship ; prescribed initiatory and expiatory rites ; founded hospitals for the poor, monasteries for the devout, and enjoined a course of penance for the flagitious ; and in all things imitated the Church discipline of that time ^f.

BUT the indifference and corruptions of Paganism, joined to the obstinacy and perseverance of the Christians, kept his project from advancing with that speed which his malice as well as zeal demanded. So that, impatient of delay, he struck out a new and daring project to alter the whole face of things at once. With this view he planned the famous scheme of rebuilding the TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM. Its final destruction had been foretold both by *Jesus* and the Prophets : and it was, as he imagined, reserved for this favorite of the Gods, to give the lye to their predictions.

HE had before (in pursuance of his general scheme of opposing Revelation to itself, by setting one sect against another) written to the Body or Community of the

^f Greg. Naz. i. Orat. cont. Jul. Sozom. l. v. c. 16.

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Jews^g, in which he assured them of his protection ; his concern for their former ill usage ; and his fixed purpose to screen them from future oppression, that they might be at liberty, and in a disposition to redouble their vows for the prosperity of his reign. And concluded with a promise, that, if he came back victorious from the *Persian* war, he would rebuild *Jerusalem*, restore them to their possessions, live with them in the holy City, and join with them in their worship of the Great God of the universe ^h.

So that, after this, a proposal of beginning with the *Temple*, we may well think, would be eagerly embraced by them. Till this was rebuilt, their Religion, as we have seen, was in a state of inanition ; Sacrifices, which were essential to it, being forbid to be offered in any other place. Hence the *Jews* had attempt-

^g Ἰσδαίων τῷ κοινῷ.

^h Καλεσθῆναι τῷ βασιλεῖαν ὑπὲρ τὰ κάλλιστα, καθάπερ προαιρέμεθα, ὅπερ καὶ ποιεῖν ὑμᾶς, ἵνα καὶ γὰρ τὸν τῶν Περσῶν πόλεμον διορθωσάμεθα, τῷ ἐκ πολλῶν ἐτῶν ὑπὸ θυμολύην παρ' ὑμῖν ἰδεῖν οἰκισμένην πόλιν αἰγίαν Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἐμοῖς καμάρτοις ἀνοικοδομήσας οἰκήσω, καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ δόξαν δώσω μετ' ὑμῶν τῷ κρείττονι.
Ερ. xxv.

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ed, more than once, to restore it, in defiance of the Power to which they were subject; first, in the reign of *Adrian*, and afterwards, under that of *Constantine*ⁱ: but reasons of state defeated the former attempt, and reasons of religion, the latter. *Adrian* regarded and punished it as a rebellion; *Constantine*, as an impiety. They were now invited, as *good subjects* and faithful worshippers of the true God, to second the Emperor's design in restoring them to their city and religion.

BUT, besides the principal purpose of utterly discrediting the Christian name, there were other auxiliary motives to push him on to a speedy execution. He liked the *Jews* for their bloody sacrifices, to which he himself was extravagantly devoted; he liked them better for their implacable hatred to the Christians, in which he far outwent them; and he soothed his family revenge, in favouring those whom *Constantine* had persecuted, and persecuted for this very attempt. To which we may add that which *Marcellinus* assigns as his

ⁱ Chrysof. advers. Judæos, passim.

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principal motive, the glory of atchieving so bold an enterprizeⁱ.

BUT *Julian*, who aimed at higher purposes than obtaining the good-will of the *Jews*, would not intrust so important a design to their inclinations or abilities. He assumed the care of it himself; and carried on the project (as far as it was carried) under the Imperial authority. He assigned for this use immense sums out of the public revenue. The superintendancy of it he committed to his bosom friend, *Alypius*^k, to whom he joined, for his assistant, the Governor of the province. *Alypius* was one who had been much obliged by *Julian*^l, and for this reason, as is the nature of princes, was as much beloved by him: but their strongest tie was a congenial malice, and equal aversion to the Christian name; qualities, doubtless, for which *Alypius* was preferred before others to this employment. This man, in conjunction with the *Jews*,

ⁱ Imperii sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare. Am. Marc. l. iii. c. i.

^k The xxixth and xxxth Epistles of *Julian* are written to him; in the latter of which he calls him, Ἀδελφὲ ποθεινότατε καὶ φιλικώτατε.

^l See the xxixth Epistle.

and

and under the sanction of the Imperial authority, entered upon the business. They laid in immense quantities of materials; they assembled vast numbers of workmen; the *Jews*, of both sexes, and of all degrees, bore a share in the labour: they entered upon the ruins, cleared away the rubbish, and opened the old foundations.

AN account of this attempt (to waive the testimony of Christian authors) is transmitted to us by a contemporary writer, of noble extraction, a friend and admirer of *Julian*, and his companion in arms; a man of affairs, learned, candid, and impartial; a lover of truth, and the best historian of his time; who, although neither ignorant of the doctrines, nor bigotted against the followers of our Faith, yet was strongly attached to the superstition of his ancestors, and, in one word, a Pagan professed and declared ^m.

^m As there have been critics absurd enough to suspect that *Ammianus Marcellinus* might be a Christian; it may be just worth while to quote a passage of the celebrated *Hadrian Valefius*, who, in few words, has well exposed this groundless conceit. “ *Petrus Pithæus* ad latus *Ammiani sui manu sua notavit, eum Christianum fuisse,*

So much then the most sceptical reader must be forced to grant. To doubt of this

“ propterea quod in libro xxvii. scripsit, *Antistites quos-*
 “ *dam provinciales*, id est, episcopos Christianorum,
 “ parco victo, vili veste, & demissis oculis, *perpetuo*
 “ *numini verisque ejus cultoribus ut parcos commendari &*
 “ *verecundos*. An ideo Ammianus Christianus habendus est, quòd Deum Christianorum *perpetuum numen*,
 “ id est, Deum æternum, & Christianos *Antistites ve-*
 “ *ros perpetui numinis cultores appellat* ? Quasi non *ve-*
 “ *ros perpetui numinis cultores* Ammianus vocaverat
 “ Gentiles ipsos ac sui similes, quibus quidam etiam
 “ Christianorum episcopi in provinciis sanctitate vitæ
 “ & verecundia commendarentur ac placerent. Ita
 “ tamen de Ammiano sensit & Claudius *Chiffletius*, cum
 “ verbis ejus supra laudatis, tum aliis levissimis conjec-
 “ turis adductus. Sed qui attente legerit, quæ præter
 “ cetera in fine libri xiv de Adraſti vel Nemefi, quæ
 “ in libro xvi de Mercurio, quæ in libro xxi de nu-
 “ mine Themidis, de Haruspicina, de Auguriis, vari-
 “ isque artibus futura prænoscenti, veteres Theologos
 “ suos, & phycos, ac mysticos secutus scripsit : pro-
 “ fectò fateri cogetur, eum cultui Deum addictum ac
 “ devotum fuisse. Certè de Diis Gentium tanquam de
 “ suis semper loquitur ; de Christianis sacris mysteriis-
 “ que non item. Nunquam Christianis se adjungit ;
 “ nunquam & nusquam eorum se numero adscribit ;
 “ & Julianum A. quem suum heroa fecit, hanc præci-
 “ puè ob causam mihi videtur toties & tantopere lau-
 “ dare, quod à religione Christiana ad numinum cultum
 “ desciverit. Quâ tamen erat prudentiâ, adeo mo-
 “ destè atque sincerè, ac nonnumquam etiam benevolè

would

would be subverting the very foundations of human credit ; and it might as well be que-

“ de Christianis rebus commemorat, ut aliqui unum ex
 “ nostris putaverint. Nimirum, sicuti existimo, vir bo-
 “ nus, integer & sapiens Religionem Christianam non
 “ sequi, tuto se posse intelligebat: eandem Principibus
 “ suis acceptam & toto ferè orbe Romano diffusam
 “ palam damnare non audebat, sed & forsitan religionum
 “ diversitates non improbavit, persuasumque habuit
 “ (sicut ait De notitia Dei Symmachus) unâ viâ non
 “ posse pervenire ad tam grande secretum.” *Præf. in*
poster. Am. Marc. editionem. To these a thousand other
 proofs might be added. I shall content myself, at pre-
 sent, with one, taken from those very words which
Chifflet has given as the strongest evidence of his Chris-
 tianity, where, speaking of *Constantius*, he says, “ Chri-
 “ stianam religionem absolutam & simplicem anili su-
 “ perstitione confundens : in qua scrutanda perplexius
 “ quam componenda gravius, excitavit discidia pluri-
 “ ma ; quæ progressa fusiùs aluit concertatione verbo-
 “ rum.” Lib. xxi. cap. 16. By these words (as the critics
 observe) are doubtless meant those two famous party-
 badges, the ὁμοῶσι and ὁμοίῳσι. Now it seems
 odd, the historian should characterize a temper of mind,
 arising from a dispute of this kind (which has rather the
 appearance of a *philosophic* than a *popular* bigotry) by
 the name of *anilis superstitio*. On a supposition, that
 the censurer was a Christian, it appears very odd :
 But consider him as a Pagan, and nothing is more natu-
 ral: He must then see this question, concerning the
 Son of God, in the same light he did what their *Mytho-*
logy taught concerning the paternity and filiation of

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tioned, whether *Cæsar* was assaulted in the Senate, as whether *Julian attempted* to rebuild the Temple of *Jerusalem*.

WHAT now was the condition of the Church at this juncture ! and how were the fears of the good people alarmed ! It had long combated, and at length triumphed over, the prejudices of the People, the arts of the Philosophers, and the violence of civil Power. It had bent the obstinacy of Superstition by

their gods ; which the learned amongst them ranked in the first class of their *aniles superstitiones*. It is true, *Ammianus* thought more reverently of the *Christian martyrs* than the famous philosophic Emperor had formerly done (who called their virtue a mere brutish obstinacy, *ψιλή ἀσθένεια*. Lib. xi. § 3.) for he says of them, — “ Qui deviare a Religione
“ compulsi, pertulere cruciabiles pœnas, adusque gloriosam mortem intemerata fide progressi nunc Martires appellantur.” Lib. xxii. cap. 11. But *Antoninus* was entirely ignorant of the Christian religion : We have shewn above what kept him from the knowledge of it. The Historian knew it well, as appears from the character he gives it, of *absoluta & simplex* ; and the dying in defense of such a religion could not but be, in his opinion, *mors gloriosa* : he being, as appears throughout his history, a religious Theist, and untainted with the *Naturalism* of *Tacitus* ; for Christianity had produced this good effect in the quarter of its enemies, that it had entirely discredited the schools of *Strato* and *Epicurus*, as *Julian* himself informs us.

the superior force of miracles : It had confounded the meretricious confidence of *Grecian* Sophistry, by the simple majesty of Truth ; and had wearied out the rage of tyranny, by constancy and contempt of suffering. But it was now summoned to a severer trial, and pushed upon the very crisis of its fate. Its enemies, supported by the whole power of the Empire, had brought a decisive scheme to its projection ; a scheme that was to reflect eternal dishonour upon the *Oracles of Truth*. The credit of God's Servants, the authority of his Word, and the very pretensions of Revelation were all vitally interested in the event. The long struggle between SUPERSTITION and RELIGION was now to be finally decided. The God of the Christians was publicly challenged : his power was defied to protect his dispensation against this impending stroke. Destitute of all human aid, their only reliance was on Heaven. And no *Believer*, but must conclude, that God would indeed interpose to vindicate the character of his Son : no *Man*, but must confess, that to support a Religion like this, was an occasion worthy the interposition of the Lord of all things.

WELL,

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WELL, the impious attack was made ; and the expected ° protection afforded. The same great and impartial historian, who acquaints us with the attempt, informs us likewise of the defeat. His account is in these words : “ *Julian* (having been already thrice “ Consul) taking *Sallust*, Prefect of the several *Gauls*, for his Collegue, entered a “ fourth time on this high magistracy. It “ appeared strange to see a private man associated with *Augustus* : a thing, which, “ since the Consulate of *Dioclesian* and “ *Aristobulus*, history afforded no example of. “ And although his sensibility of the many “ and great events, which this year was “ likely to produce, made him very anxious for the future, yet he pushed on the “ various and complicated preparatives for “ this expedition with the utmost application ; and having an eye in every quar-

° τότε δὴ Κύριος ὁ τῶν Ἱεροσολύμων Ἐπίσκοπος, τὸ ἅγιον Πρωφῆτα Δανιὴλ κατὰ νῆν ἐλάμβανεν, ὅπερ καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἐν τοῖς ἁγίοις Ἐυαγγελίοις ἐπεσφραγίσας, πολλοῖς τε προέλεγε, ὡς ἄρα νῦν ἦκε ὁ καιρὸς, ὅτε λίθη ὅτι λίθου σὺν αὐτοῖς μύροις εἰς τὸ ναὸν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τῷ Σωτῆρι λόγιον πληρωθήσε. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. cap. 20.

“ ter,

“ter, and being desirous to eternize his
“reign by the greatness of his atchieve-
“ments, he projected to rebuild, at an im-
“mense expence, the proud and magnifi-
“cent Temple of *Jerusalem*; which (after
“many combats, attended with much blood-
“shed on both sides, during the siege by *Ves-*
“*pasian*) was, with great difficulty, taken
“and destroyed by *Titus*. He committed the
“conduct of this affair to *ALYPIUS* of *An-*
“*tioch*, who formerly had been Lieutenant
“in *Britain*. When, therefore, this *Aly-*
“*pius* had set himself to the vigorous execu-
“tion of his charge, in which he had all
“the assistance that the Governor of the
“province could afford him, horrible balls
“of fire, breaking out near the foundations,
“with frequent and reiterated attacks, ren-
“dered the place, from time to time, inac-
“cessible to the scorched and blasted work-
“men; and the victorious element continu-
“ing, in this manner, obstinately and re-
“solutely bent, as it were, to drive them
“to a distance, *Alypius* thought best to give
“over the enterprize P.”

P Julianus jam ter Consul adscito in Collegium tra-
beæ Sallustio, Præfecto per Gallias, quater ipse amplif-

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THUS did the vigilance of Providence not only vindicate the honour of our holy faith in the open view of all men, but, in its goodness, secured the *memory* of this atrocious act by the testimony of the most unexceptionable Witness. For were Infidelity itself, when it would evade the force of evidence, to prescribe what qualities it expected in a faultless testimony, it could invent none but what might be found in the historian here produced. He was a Pagan,

simum inierat magistratum: & videbatur novum, adjunctum esse Augusto privatum, quod post Dioclesianum & Aristobulum nullus meminerat gestum. Et licet accidentium varietatem sollicita mente præcipiens, multiplicatos expeditionis apparatus flagranti studio perurgeret: diligentiam tamen ubique dividens, imperii que sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolimam templum, quod post multa & interneciva certamina, obsidente Vespasiano posteaque Tito, ægre est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis: negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiocheni, qui olim Britannias curaverat pro Præfectis. Cum itaque rei idem fortiter instaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ Rector, metuendi globi flammæ prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exultis aliquoties operantibus inaccessible: hocque modo elemento destinatus repellente, cessavit inceptum. Amm. Marc. lib. xxiii. cap. 1.

and

and so not prejudiced in favour of Christianity : He was a dependent, a follower, and a profound admirer of *Julian*, and so not inclined to report any thing to his dishonour : He was a lover of truth, and so would not relate what he knew, or but suspected, to be false : He had great sense, improved by the study of philosophy and knowledge of the world, and so would not easily suffer himself to be deceived : He was not only contemporary to the fact ; but, at the time it happened, resident near the place : He recorded the event not on its first report, when, in the relation of journalary occurrences, much falshood blends itself with truth ; but after time and enquiry, which separates this impure mixture, had confirmed what was real in the case : He related it not as an uncertain report or hearsay, with diffidence ; but as a notorious fact, at that time, no more questioned in *Asia*, than the project and success of the *Persian* expedition : He inserted it not for any partial purpose ; in support or confutation of any system ; in defence or discredit of any character : He delivered it in no cursory or transient manner, nor in a loose or private memoir ; but gravely
and

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and deliberately, as the natural and necessary part of a composition the most useful and important, a general History of the Empire ; on the complete performance of which the author was so intent, that he exchanged a court life, for one of study and contemplation ; and chose *Rome*, the great repository of these materials, for the place of his retirement.

BUT the evidence given by the adversaries of our faith to the truth of this illustrious miracle does not rest upon a single Witness : I propose to shew, that even JULIAN himself, whose impiety brought this disgrace upon Paganism, has confessed the hand by which he was overcome ; though with that obscurity, and confusion of tongue, which always attends the graceless shame of an impenitent offender.

AND I shall be the fuller in weighing the value of this testimony, as it hath hitherto, I think, been entirely overlooked, and, by reason of its affected disguise, pass'd the critics unobserved.

I have already taken notice of his Letter to the *community of the Jews*. From that
part

part of it, wherein he informs them how he had punished those who had given their people unjust vexation, it appears to have been written early in his reign ; on his first coming to *Constantinople*, when he purged the city and palace of spies, informers, and the like pests of a corrupted Court⁹. The prin-

⁹ *Sozomene* takes notice of this letter, καὶ πατριάρχαι καὶ ἄρχηγοὶς αὐτῶν καὶ αὐτῶ ἢ τῶ πλήθι ἐβλαψεν, εὐχεσθ' ὑπὲρ αὐτῶ καὶ τῆς αὐτῶ βασιλείας. Notwithstanding which, those who have conveyed it to us from antiquity, have stamped this mark of doubt and suspicion on the face of it, εἰ γνήσιον. Without question, they believed it to be forged by the *Jews*. The writer of it calls the injuries offered to the *Jews*, *impious* ; as if they were a holy nation — Καὶ τὸ τῆς ποταύτης δυσφημίας ἀσέβημα ἐβλαῦθα ἐβιασάμεν σῆσαι : that he had precipitated the Delators into horrible dungeons with his own hands, ὅς μὲν ἐγὼ ἐν χερσὶν ἐμαῖς λαβόμενος, εἰς βόθρον ὥσας ὤλεσα. He calls the Patriarch his *Brother*, τὸ ἀδελφὸν Ἰσλὸν τὸ αἰδεσιμώτατον πατριάρχην. and promises, that, when he had restored their City, he would come thither, and live and worship with them. All these the Critics conceived to smell strongly of imposture. But what probably most confirmed their suspicions, was the *use* the *Jews* made of it, to evade a miracle that so much humbled them : We see it only promises their restoration *after* his *Persian* expedition. And one *R. David Gans*, of the sixteenth century, in the second part of his book, called *Zamach*, quoted by *Wagenfeilius*, in his *Tela ignea Satanæ*, p. 231. appears to have

principal design of it is to tell them of his purpose to rebuild their city, on his return

made this very use of it. "Julianus Cæsar præcepit ut re-
 "stitueretur Templum sanctissimum, magno cum de-
 "core & pulchritudine, huicque rei ipse sumtus sup-
 "peditavit. Verum cœlitus impedimentum injectum
 "est ne perficeretur fabrica, NAM Cæsar in bello Per-
 "sico periit."

But what *Greg. Nazianzen*, in his second *Inveective*, tells us of the conference that followed this letter, plainly shews it to be genuine. *Julian*, he says, assured the leaders of the *Jews*, he had discovered, from their sacred books, that the time of their restoration was at hand. ὁπθιεύων τε δὴθεν ἐκ τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς βίβλων καὶ ἀπορρήτων, ὡς νῦν αὐτοῖς ἀποκείμενον εἶη καλεσθῆναι εἰς τὴν ἐαυτῶν καὶ νεῶν ἀναδείμασθαι, καὶ τῶν παλαιοῦν τὸ κοσμεῖν ἀνανεώσασθαι καὶ ἀποκρυπτόμενον εὐνοίας πλάσματι τὴν ὁπνίσαν. — It is not a mere curiosity to enquire, what Prophecy it was, that *Julian* perverted; because it tends to confirm the truth of *Nazianzen's* relation. I have sometimes thought it might possibly be the words of the Septuagint, in *Dan. ix. 27.* Σωτέλεια δοθήσεται ὁπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν. The ambiguity of which *Julian* took the advantage of (against *hellenistic Jews*, who, it is probable, knew no more of the Original than himself) as signifying, *the Tribute shall be given to the desolate*, instead of, *the consummation shall be poured upon the desolate*. For the letter in question tells us, he had remitted their *tribute*; and by so doing, we see, was for passing himself upon them for a kind of second *Cyrus*.

All this (that is to say, the authenticity of the letter,
 from

from the *Persian* war. And without doubt he then intended to defer the re-establishment of the *Jewish* religion till that war

the truth of *Nazianzen's* relation, and this conjecture concerning the prophecy *Julian* pretended to go upon) seems greatly to be supported by what the Christian writers say of the behaviour of the *Jews* while the project was in agitation. *Socrates* tells us, that they menaced the Christians, and threatened to treat them as they themselves had been treated by the *Romans*. L. iii.

c. 20. — Φοβερὰς ἣ τοῖς χριστιανοῖς ἐπεδείκνυσαν ἐαυτὰς, ἡλαζονόοντό τε καὶ αὐτῶν, ἐπαπειλόντες ποσᾶντα ποιῆσειν, ὅσα αὐτοὶ ποτὶ τῷ Ῥωμαίων πάλαι πεπόνθασι.

And *Rufinus* says, *they were as vain as if they had had a Prophet of their own at their head.* And this they might well be, when they had an Emperor who promised to live and worship with them, and set himself up for the Restorer foretold by their Prophets.

There is only one thing in the Letter, which remains to be accounted for ; and that is the strange boast he makes of his personal atchievement, in *thrusting down the Delators into dungeons with his own hands* : in which the Imperial character is so little preserved, that the learned *M. de la Bleterie* is almost tempted, on this single circumstance, to give up the Letter for a forgery. But he here forgets what he himself had before mentioned of the strange escapes of this fantastic Monarch. “ Saint Gregoire Nazianze dit, que Julien “ chassoit à coups de *pié* & de *poing* de pauvres gens “ qui venoient lui demander des graces. Ces *pauvres* “ gens (says *M. de la Bleterie*) pouvoient bien être des “ DELATEURS.” Vie de Julien, p. 314. 2^d Edit.

was at an end. But his various attacks upon Christianity not succeeding to his hopes, he grew enraged by his defeat, and resolved to put this last effort of his malice in immediate execution.

WE may be assured, this Letter had brought the principal *jews*, from all quarters, to Court. The manner in which he appeared to interest himself in their quarrel, could not but persuade them, that the Apostate from Christianity was become more than half a Profelyte to Judaism. While he, on his part, flattered himself, that those who adhered so obstinately to bloody sacrifices might be easily cajoled into Idolatry.

THESE, apparently, were the men, whom, *Chrysostome* and *Gregory Nazianzen* tell us, he called together, to enquire, Why they did not offer sacrifices as the *Law* directed; at a time when the Empire stood so much in need of the divine protection, and the Emperor was so well disposed to implore it from every quarter. They replied, that it was not lawful to sacrifice but in the *Temple of Jerusalem* only. This was what He would be at: So he took the advantage of their answer,

answer, to facilitate his secret purpose; which was to give the lye at once to all the Prophets and Messengers of God.

FOR we are by no means to suppose him so ignorant as not to know what the *Law*, in this case, required. That very letter to the *Community* plainly insinuates he knew it. His acquaintance with Scripture must have informed him of it: for if there was any part to which he would give greater attention than the rest, it was the Ritual of sacrifices, a species of worship, to which he was inordinately addicted. Besides, in his *Discourse* against the Christian Religion, he occasionally, but in express words, declares, it was of the nature of the Mosaic Law, to offer sacrifices at *Jerusalem* only^r. But as this discourse was written some time after that consultation, I would lay the less weight upon it.

HOWEVER, no one, I think, can doubt, but that the whole Conference was a Farce; that *Julian* only wanted a screen for his malice; and that the pretence of procur-

^r Ὑμεῖς ᾗ οἱ τὴν καινὴν θυσίαν ἐυρόντες, εἰδὲν δεόμενοι τῆς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, ἀντὶ τίνος εἰ θύετε; — apud Cyril. p. 306. Span. Ed.

ing the means of their intercession with the God of the Universe, for the prosperity of the Empire, was no other than a decent cover for putting this last effort of his rage in present execution. The *Jews* eagerly fell in with his project; and the issue was as we have related it.

THIS great event happened in the beginning of the Year CCCLXIII, as appears from the express words of *Ammianus Marcellinus*, quoted above. *Julian*, who then wintered at *Antioch*, was preparing for his *Persian* expedition; for which he did not set out till the month of *March*. So unexpected a traverse, we must suppose, would be immediately carried to him^s, with all the circumstances that attended it: *Alypius* could not but assure him, that it was impracticable to persist in the attempt; and that his agents were utterly incapable of speedily renewing it. What his first sentiments were, on this occasion, we have no certain or particular account: how he resented the disgrace in his cooler hours, I am now going to shew.

THERE is, amongst the writings of *Julian*, a notable fragment of an *Oration*, or

^s ταῦτα ἤκασε μὲν Ἰουλιανός. Theod. l. iii. c. 20.

Epistle,

Epistle, call it which you will, first given us by *Petavius*, wherein the Emperor, with great abilities and learning, prescribes and marks out a method to reform Paganism, and set it up for a Rival to the Gospel, in all the plausible pretences to piety and virtue. This, and his books against the Christian Religion, were the two master wheels of the same machine: the one to degrade Christianity, the other to advance Superstition: and therefore it is no wonder we find them written at the same time. St. *Jerom* expressly says^t, that the books against our holy Faith were composed during the *Persian* expedition. *Libanius*, indeed, intimates, they were written in his winter quarters at *Antioch*. Their accounts may be easily reconciled, in supposing *that* part to be planned and begun before his remove. However, that *these* directions for the reformation of Paganism were as late as the *Persian* expedition, we have the author's own word, where, speaking of the customary honours paid to the Gods, he says ---- " which not
" THREE years, nor three thousand have
" established ; but all past ages, amongst

^t Ep. lxxxiii. ad Magnum Oratorem.

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"all the nations upon earth". By the *three years* he evidently alludes to his restoration of Idolatry ; which, at any time sooner than the *Persian* expedition, was not intitled to so high a date. For he was first saluted *Augustus* in the spring of the year CCCLX, and the *Persian* expedition was in the spring CCCLXIII.

AT this time, therefore, he had well digested his defeat at *Jerusalem*. What effects it left upon his temper, the following passage of this fragment will inform us ; where, after having justified the Gods for suffering their temples, images, and most devout worshippers to be injuriously treated, he proceeds thus : --- " Let no man, therefore, " because he hath seen or heard of those who " have insulted their images and temples, " entertain any doubts concerning their superintendency. For this reason too, let " them not think to delude us with their " sophistry, nor terrify us with the cry of " *Providence*. For, the Prophets amongst " the *Jews*, who so much upbraid us with

" — ἥς ἐνομοθέτησαν ἐκ ἐνιαυτοῦ τέττις, ἔδὲ τριχί-
λίοι· πᾶς δὲ ὁ προλαβὼν αἰὼν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς τῆς γῆς
ἔθνεσιν. p. 294. Spanh. Ed.

" these

“ these disasters, what will they say to their
 “ own Temple ? that Temple of theirs, which
 “ has been now a third time destroyed ^w, and
 “ is not raised again to this day. I say not
 “ this to upbraid them; for I myself, after
 “ so long a desolation, would have rebuilt it,
 “ in honour of the God which was there wor-
 “ shipped. But I now mention it only as I
 “ was willing to shew, that nothing human
 “ is exempt from the injuries of time. As
 “ to the Prophets, who write in this manner,
 “ they merely rave, and cant to the capaci-

^w The learned *J. A. Fabricius* thinks this *τρίτον ἀναλε-
 γέναι* includes the defeat of *Julian's* attempt to rebuild
 the Temple ; and so, in his *Lux Evangelii*, he brings it
 to prove *Julian's* own acknowledgment of the miracle :
 in which he has been followed by *M. de la Bleterie* and
 others. But 1. Defeating an attempt to rebuild cannot,
 in any known figure of speech, be called the overthrow
 of a building. 2. *Ἐγερμένος ὁ ἱεὺς νῦν* can never be
 said of a building destroyed but two months before. In
 a word, *Fabricius* is mistaken ; the three subversions
 here meant, were — that by the *Affyrians*, — that by
Herod, the son of *Antipater*, — and that by *Vespasian*.
 And though *Herod's* demolition of it was only in order
 to rebuild it, yet it was such a one as *Julian* might pro-
 perly enough urge for the support of his argument, a-
 gainst an objection, that supposed *stability* amongst the
 qualities to be looked for in the domicile of the *true* God ;
 which the Pagan temples not having, were concluded to
 belong to the *false*. — Or it may possibly be, that, instead
 of *Herod's* demolition, he might allude to the *Prophana-*
tion of it by *Antiochus*, as a learned Friend suggests.

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“ ties of dreaming old women. Not that
 “ I would insinuate, the God they worship
 “ is not great and mighty: but this I say, he
 “ hath no good Prophets, nor Interpreters of
 “ his will, amongst them. The reason is, they
 “ never applied themselves to purge and puri-
 “ fy the mind in the circle of human science,
 “ nor tried to open their eyes which igno-
 “ rance had fast closed, nor strove to drive
 “ away the darkness in which they lay involv-
 “ ed: but are as men, who through mists or
 “ clouds see the great light of heaven * nei-
 “ ther clearly nor distinctly, and mistake that
 “ ethereal splendor for an impure terrestrial
 “ fire; and stark blind to all Nature work-
 “ ing round them, roar out with frantic ve-
 “ hemence, *Fear and tremble, ye inhabitants*
 “ *of earth! Fire, lightening, the sword,*
 “ *darts, death,* and all the frightful words
 “ that express that one destructive property
 “ of FIRE. But of these things it is more
 “ expedient to speak in private, where we
 “ may shew, how much these masters of

* *Julian*, by *Φῶς μέγα*, means the *Sun*, as before, *Θεὸν μέγαν*, the *God of the universe*. For, *Φῶς καθαρὸν* which follows, was, I believe, never used by these Fanatic Platonists, for a *terrestrial* fire, it being the term they gave to their *holy light*, or the *ἁγίον Ἀγαλμα*. *Julian* thought nothing more holy than the *Sun*. He did not add the article, because he is here expressing the idea of the mistaken beholder, — *a great light*, tho', by *that*, he himself meant, *the great light*.

“ wisdom

“ wisdom, who pretend to be sent from
“ God, are inferior to our Poets.”

THE reader, who consults the fragment from whence this long passage is transcribed,

Υ Μηδεις εν απισείτω θεοις ορων η ακων, ως ενύ-
βεισάν τινες εις τα αγάλμαα η ου ΝΑΟΥΣ. Μη-
δεις εν απαλάτω λόγοις μηδε ταρχίτέτω ωει της
προνοίας ημας· οι γω ημιν ονειδιζοντες ποιαυτα, τ̃ Ιε-
δαίων οι Προφη̃, τί ωει ε̃ νεω φήσσει; τ̃ παρ̃
αυτοις τ̃ειπου ανάλραπένι̃, εγειρομύκ, η̃ εδ̃ νυ̃.
Εγω η̃ ειπον ουκ ονειδιζων εκείνοις οσγε ποςτοις υσε-
ρον χρονοις ανασήσαο̃ διανοήθιλω αυτον εις τιμην ε̃
κληθένι̃ επ̃ αυτω, θε̃ νυ̃ η̃ εχρησάμην αυτω, δε̃ξαι
βελόμην̃, οτι τ̃ ανθρωπίνων εδ̃εν αφθαρίον ειναι δύ-
να̃· κα̃ οι τα̃ ποιαυτα γράφοιτες ελήρεν προφη̃,
γα̃ιδίοις ψυχροις όμιλ̃ντες. Ουθεν η̃, ο̃ιμαι, κωλύ̃
τ̃ μη̃ θεόν ειναι μέγαν ε̃ μιν̃ (ιεδαίων προφητων εδ̃ε
εξηγητων τυχε̃ν, ειπον η̃ οτι τιν̃ εαυτων ψυχλιν̃, ε̃
παρέχον̃ αποκαθα̃ρει τοις εγκυκλίοις μαθήμασιν· ε̃τε
ανο̃ξαι μεμνκότα λiαν τα̃ όμματα· εδ̃ε ανακαθα̃ρει
τιν̃. Όπικειμήην αυτοις άχλιω̃. Απ̃ ο̃ιον φως μέγα
δι̃ όμίχλης οι ανθρωποι βλέποντες ε̃ καθαρω̃ς, εδ̃ε
ειλικρινω̃ς, αυτ̃ η̃ εκ̃ε̃νο νενομικότες ε̃χι φως καθαρόν,
α̃λλα ΠΤΡ, ε̃ τ̃ ωει αυτ̃ πάντων όντες αθέατοι, βο̃ω-
σι μεγάλα· φε̃ιτε̃· φοβ̃ε̃σθε̃ π̃ρ, φλόξ, θάναι̃,
μάχαιρα, ρομφαία· πολλοις ονόμασι μiαν̃ εξηγέμενοι
τιν̃ βλαπτικήν τ̃ πυρός δωάμιν· απ̃ υπ̃ερ̃ μη̃ τ̃-
των ιδία βέλτιον̃ ω̃ραση̃σαι, πόσω̃ φαυλότεροι τ̃ παρ̃·
ημιν̃ ε̃τω γεγόνασι ποιητων, οι τ̃ υπ̃ερ̃ τ̃ θε̃ λόγων
διδάσκαλοι. p. 295. Spanh. Ed.

will

will perceive, that it is a mere digression. But if it were foreign to his subject, we shall see it concerned a matter very intimate to his thoughts. The persecuted Church of *Christ* was, at this time, triumphant, and *loudly* exulting in the divine protection so miraculously afforded it. The Apostate, when the power of the Empire failed him, had recourse to this last expedient, the arms of calumny, to vent his rage, and cover the shame of his disappointment. And then it was that, exchanging the *Imperial* for the *Sophist's Throne*^z, he composed the two Discourses mentioned above. Now, to be altogether silent on a subject, that was plainly the occasion of his writing, would have been an affectation that had rather betrayed, than covered, his self-conviction. On the other hand, the Soldier's pride of heart, the Sophist's contempt for his adversaries, and the Monarch's delicacy for the imperial dignity, would not suffer him to enter on a formal altercation. Besides, in this case, he must either have confessed or denied the Fact. The one would have completed the triumph of his Adversaries, and the other

^z ὅτι θρόνον τινὸς ὑψηλῶς μάλα σοφιστικῶς ἢ βασιλικῶς.
Themist. Orat. i.

offended

offended the ingenuity of his Friends. He therefore chose a middle way : and, under shew of condemning the denunciations of the Jewish Prophets against past Idolatries, as the ravings of enthusiasm, he covertly represents the triumphs of the Church, on the present occasion, as the workings of the same spirit upon the ground of a natural event.

FOR, taking occasion (tho' the subject of the work before us was the *reformation of Paganism*) to vindicate that Worship from the dishonours it had from time to time suffered, in the overthrow of its temples and idols, he observes, that those who exulted most in its disgraces, the *Jewish prophets* (whose writings, indeed, abound with exclamations and denunciations on the folly of idolatry, the impuissance of idols, and the destruction to which both were devoted) had of all men the least reason to triumph ; since their own TEMPLE had been thrice destroyed, and at that very time lay in ruins. This leads him to the subject he wanted covertly to touch upon : he therefore adds, that he spoke this out of no ill-will to the *community of the Jews*, for that he was himself *desirous of rebuilding their Temple*. No, but only to convince them that neither the over-

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throw of their Temple, nor the Temples of Paganism, was the sentence of divine wrath upon them, but the natural condition of earthly things. And, enraged at the contrary principle, which occasioned these exultations in the christian Church, he attempts to shew, in the character he gives of the *jewish* Prophets, which he trusted the intelligent reader would apply to the christian Ministers, that it was the issue of ignorance and superstition. These Prophets he represents as despising human science, and acting upon the principles, and preaching to the capacities of ignorant and superstitious women. But, lest this should not sufficiently mark his purpose, by an elegant similitude, in which he employs his favourite idol, the *Sun*, to shew the root of these superstitions to be the ignorance of nature ^a, he makes those, whom he supposes under its illusions, to cry out in the very exclamations that then resounded from one end of the Christian world to the other, *Fear and tremble, ye inhabitants of earth! --- Fire, lightning, the sword, darts, death, and all the frightful words* (says he)

^a And for a further purpose, which will be explained when we come to speak of the accounts which the Christians of that time give us of this miracle.

which

which express that one destructive property of Fire. --- But as if now he had run riot, he suddenly checks himself, and observes, that this was a subject properer for a private audience: yet, concluding with a contemptuous parallel, he once again drops the mask, and turns his discourse from the *Jewish prophets*, which had been hitherto his cover, directly to the *Christian teachers*, whom he had indeed all along attacked under it: but now more openly calls οἱ τῷ ὑπὲρ τοῦ Θεοῦ λόγων διδάσκαλοι, *those masters of wisdom pretending to be sent from God.*

ON this exposition of the passage, let me just make the following remarks.

I. IF we understand the observations contained in it as *indefinite*, nothing can be more disjointed or absurd^b. The Christians of that

^b It evidently appeared to be so to the ingenious M. de la Bleterie, who considered the passage only in this view: therefore, to save the honour of the writer, he condemns the man, and turns the defect of the composition to a charge on the prevarication of the composer: “ On voit ici [says he, in his excellent history of this Emperor, p. 399.] “ que Julien loin de conclure de ce qui étoit arrivé à Jerusalem la verité de la Religion Chrétienne, en inferoit que la revelation Judaïque étoit fausse. Etrange effet de la prevention.—

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time were wont to draw an argument of the impuissance of Polytheism from the repeated disgraces the heathen temples and their idols had suffered in every period of the world. *Julian* undertakes to solve this objection; but, instead of directing his answer to the Christians, who now make it against him, he *retorts* it upon the Jews, who, many ages ago, had made it against others. These he wantonly provokes at a time his views made them necessary to him. Again, he speaks of these *Prophets* with such ambiguity and confusion, that you may either take them for the writers of the Old testament, or the Heads of the Jewish community of that time: which no rules of good writing can account for, but that which allows cautious authors to call one system of things by the names that belong to another. Lastly, he recounts some terrifying exclamations as made by the Prophets, which they never did make; and which, tho' made by Christ and his Apostles, are, by them, applied to the punishments of an *hereafter*;

For *Julian* does not infer the falsehood of *Judaism* from their inability to rebuild their own Temple, but from the false judgment they were wont to pass on the destruction of others.

whereas

whereas he is speaking of what the worshippers of One God say of the dispensations of Providence *here*. We must conclude therefore, that the exclamations, quoted in this passage, must needs be those which the recent event at *Jerusalem* had occasioned.

2. TAKE the passage in this sense, and nothing can be more artful than the conduct of the Imperial Sophist. Our Religion was at this juncture properly triumphant. It was exulting over *Paganism* in the destruction of the temple at *Daphné*^c; it was exulting over *Judaism* in the divine opposition to the restoration of that at *Jerusalem*; and over the *Apostate* Emperor in the disgraces of both. This spirit *Julian* wanted to repress and mortify. In the case of *Apollo's* temple he had no reason to be de-

^c The Oracle of *Apollo* in the Temple at *Daphné* near *Antioch* had been for some time dumb. When *Julian* came thither, he urged the God himself to declare the cause of his silence. The Oracle replied, that he was hindered by the bones of St. *Babylas*, which were then enshrined in his neighbourhood. These *Julian* ordered to be removed: And soon after the Temple at *Daphné* was burnt to the ground. The Christians (says *Sozomen*) affirmed it was by lightning from Heaven: but the Pagans laughed at this, and said it was fired by the *Galileans*.

licate. As to *that* of the God of *Israel*, we have shewn, it would not bear a professed mention. How has he conducted his discourse? By retorting upon the *Jews*, in the case of their old ruined Temple, the *Christian* objection arising from that at *Daphné*: which recrimination served a double purpose; to introduce what he had to say on his own baffled attempt, and to say it (which was the great point) obscurely and darkly. Thus the christian Triumphs, which he introduces to ridicule, are so represented as to have a more obvious reference to the Temple at *Daphné*, and a covert one to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, by the choice of several words which necessarily extend it to that further meaning. And now the retortion on the *Jewish* writers will not appear so forced and unnatural. It was a Christian practice to apply the language of the Old testament to the events of the Gospel dispensation; and the confusion of idols and idolaters being the standing subject of those writings, we may be sure, the Christians would not fail to apply every thing of this nature to the present occasion. So that those being employed as divine decisions to confirm their cause, naturally became the object of *Julian's* resentment.

3. THIS likewise well accounts for the title of *Prophets*, which he gives these Jewish Writers or Rulers; and for his abuse of them under that character. It was to prevent the Reader's stopping at *Apollo's Temple*, when it was the writer's purpose to lead him silently to that of *Jerusalem*: to which only the Jewish Prophets and their *Prophecies* could have any reference. There is another reflexion Julian makes, which relates as little to the destruction of the Temple at *Daphné*; and that is where he speaks of their *ignorance of nature*, τῇ περὶ αὐτὸ πᾶντων ὄντες ἀθέατοι, by which he would insinuate, the readiness in believing miracles arises from that ignorance. But he could never intend this observation should be applied to *Apollo's Temple*, which he was persuaded was not consumed by lightning. These then we may consider as certain marks of his further meaning. And, indeed, if he had it not, What reason was there for being so shy in mentioning that Idol Temple? Its destruction did not at all distress him; as he believed it was set on fire by the Christians. But, in the other case, he had to do with the God of the Christians; and he was not yet in an humour, whatever

he might be afterwards, to cry, *Vicisti, Galilæe.*

4. IT being now clearly seen, that *Julian* in this passage refers to his defeat, the covert manner in which he owns himself overcome, adds greatly to the weight of it. For no suspicion can lye against so oblique a reference to the Fact, even in the opinion of those who could smell forgery in an open and direct confession. An Impostor, *piously* disposed to procure *Julian's* testimony against himself, would never think of doing it so obscurely, as that it should escape the notice of those whom he principally intended to deceive.

THUS far concerning the APOSTATE'S own testimony. But as there were three Parties interested in this affair, the *Pagans*, the *Jews*, and the *Christians*; our evidence might be thought defective, if any one of them were wanting on so solemn an occasion.

WE shall therefore, in the next place, produce the testimony of a famous RABBI: who, tho' late in time, yet composed the work, from whence the following passage is taken, on the Traditions and Records of the
several

several ages he writes of. This is the celebrated R. *Gedaliah ben Joseph Jechaja*; he lived in the fifteenth century, and, in his history called *Schalscheleth Hakkabbala* expresses himself to this effect: "In the days
 " of R. *Channan* and his brethren, about
 " the year of the world 4349, our Annals
 " tell us, there was a great earthquake *over*
 " *all the earth*; by which the Temple which
 " the *Jews* had raised at *Jerusalem* with vast
 " expence, at the command of *Julian* the
 " apostate, was thrown down. The day
 " after the earthquake, a dreadful fire fell
 " from heaven, which melted all the iron
 " tools and instruments employed about the
 " work; and destroyed many, nay incredible
 " numbers of the *Jews*^d." I will make
 two remarks on this testimony. 1. The
 Historian's calling it an *earthquake over all*

^d In diebus R. Channan & sociorum ejus, anno circiter orbis conditi 4349, memorant libri annalium, magnum in orbe universo fuisse terræ motum, collapsumque esse Templum quod struxerunt Judæi Hierosolymis, præcepto Cæsaris Juliani Apostatæ, impensis maximis. Postridie ejus diei [quo mota fuerat terra] de Cœlo ignis multus cecidit, ita ut omnia ferramenta illius ædificii liquecerent, & amburerentur Judæi multi atque adeo innumerabiles. *Apud Wagenfeil. Tela ignea Satanae*, p. 231.

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the earth, is in the language of the *Jews*; and the same with that of the Evangelist, who tells us, that at the crucifixion, *there was darkness over all the earth*^e. 2. His speaking of the Temple as actually rebuilt, shews he had not his materials from Pagan or Christian writers; who are unanimous that no more than the foundations were prepared. And, as there is no visible purpose why he should *invent* this circumstance, we must conclude, he found it thus related in the Annals of the Rabbins; the composers of which might possibly draw this conclusion from what they found recorded of the contributions of their People on this occasion, which, according to all accounts, were immense. 3. The historian says, it was at the *command of Julian*; which, without bringing Christianity into the question, supplies his Reader with a plausible account of this visible mark of the divine displeasure at the attempt; and consequently affords his brethren a principle on which they might believe the fact consistently with their profession of *Judaism*.

HERE then, for the present, we shall rest our evidence; ON THE CONFESSION OF

^e Luke xxiii. 44.

OUR

OUR ADVERSARIES THEMSELVES: And, from the *nature of the* TESTIMONY, proceed to some considerations on the *nature of the* FACT, in order to the fuller establishment of this important truth.

ONE of the requisite qualities in a *false* Miracle, that pretends to live and do well, is, that the fact on which it rises, be private, obscure, unconcerning, and remote from general observation. And tho' these circumstances may sometimes attend a *true* one; yet that is but accidental, and hurts not its credit, so long as it is accompanied, which it ever is, with others, that supply their defects. But for a false Miracle to pretend to the distinction of *public notoriety*, would be too impudent a reliance even on religious credulity. To feign a miracle on a civil fact, which must have passed in sight of a whole nation, would be rather an attempt to put out men's eyes, than to induce their belief. Hence it is we see, the *lying wonders* of him, *whose coming was after the working of Satan*^f, so well answer the description which He, who came with all the power of the Father, hath given us of every subtile Impos-

^f 2 Theff. ii. 9.

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tor in general, that *they love darkness rather*
than light, because their deeds are evil.

Now the *Project* to rebuild the Temple of *Jerusalem* was a public transaction, the most notorious and interesting of that Age.

THE *Projector* was no other than the Emperor of the world himself : a circumstance alone sufficient to draw the attention of the World upon it.

HIS *Attempt* produced other circumstances that would obtrude themselves even on the most incurious. The principal *Jews* were called together from all quarters^ε : *Alypius*, a man of the first figure, was put at the head of the Undertaking : an immense quantity of materials was laid in ; vast numbers of workmen were assembled : and the impotent triumphs of the *Jews* gave an eclat to every movement which the restless tho' determined spirit of *Julian* was hourly pushing forward.

ε — τῶν γὰρ ἐκείνοι [οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι] τῶν λόγων ἀπα-
σίως ἀκρόασις, ἅπασιν τὰ προσελαβμένα τοῖς κτ' ἢ οἰ-
κηθῆναι ὁμοφύλοις ἐδήλωσαν. Οἱ δὲ πάντοθεν σπεύσαντες,
ἢ χρημάτων ἢ προθυμίαν εἰς τὴν οἰκοδομίαν εἰσφέρουσι.
Theodoret. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 20.

THE

THE *Place* contributed no less to its notoriety. It was in the centre of the Empire ; and in the head quarters of the two religious Parties that then divided it.

THE *Time* likewise was critical. The religious World had just suffered a surprising revolution. It had been suddenly brought back from the *new* Opinions to a profession of the *old*. Yet the disgraced Religion, by courage and constancy in suffering, still kept its enemies anxious amidst all their success, and fearful amidst all their power for what might be the final issue.

THE *Action* too was capitally interesting : The design of the project was to give the last blow to the credit of *Christianity*. And the honour of the new and old profession was staked on the event. We have shewn that every body understood *Julian's* purpose to be no other than to put a public affront upon Revelation. Paganism was big with expectation. The Church in general was alarmed ; but the more knowing and pious amongst them, to the very last, mocked and defied the impiety of the attempt ^h.

^h Cyrillus, post Maximum confessorem, Jerosolymis habebatur episcopus: Apertis igitur fundamentis, cal-

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SUCH were the various *passions and interests* which concurred with the *Time* and *Place* to engage the attention, and excite the impatience of all men for the event.

BUT now, when full expectation on the one side, and continued alarms on the other, had set the world at gaze, the project suddenly disappeared. It was as if it had never been; and the Temple once more presented itself in its old ruins; but with a worse face, of horror and desolation. A surprising issue of so much determined power, and immense preparation!

A World, thus attentive and concerned, could not but be desirous of knowing the *cause* of so sudden a change of measures, if it were a change of measures, that influenced the event. Did the Emperor relent? Did his Agents fail in their obedience; or were the Jews, on better thoughts, intimi-

ces cæmentaque adhibita: nihil omnino deerat, quin die postera, veteribus deturbatis, nova jacerent fundamenta; cum tamen episcopus, diligenti consideratione habita, vel ex his quæ in Danielis Prophetia de temporibus legerat, vel quod in Evangeliiis Dominus prædixerat, persisteret nullo genere fieri posse ut ibi a Judæis lapis super lapidem poneretur. *Res erat in expectatione.* — Rufini Hist. Eccl. l. x. c. 37, &c.

dated?

dated? Was the purpose diverted by a Foreign invasion, or by Domestic tumults? Did some hostile Barbarian, at that juncture, break in upon the Empire; or some rebellious Province suspend and weaken its authority? Or lastly, did the Christians themselves defeat this insult, by opposing force to force? One or other of these *causes* must be given, to account, in a natural way, for the defeat: and yet the astonished Inquirer perceived that none of these had the least share in it. The Emperor's hatred to our holy Faith kept increasing to his death: *Alypius's* fidelity to his Master, and zeal for the old Superstition were without bounds; and the mad insolence of the *Jews* proved them as devoid of fear before, as of shame, after the event. The Empire, in all *other* quarters, was at peace; and the only enemy it had, in *these*, was the Persian; who was too much alarmed by Julian's preparations, and too much taken up in putting its own frontiers in a condition of defence, to think of farther provoking him by new inroads into the Empire.

WHAT then would be the state of men's minds on this posture of affairs? Those who were more remote, would, in their loss for
a na-

a natural cause, be attentive to what was told them of a miracleⁱ. And those who were on the place would want no means of convincing their hearers. For nothing was equivocal. The Directors, the Overseers, and the Agents in this attempt were all scattered and dispersed ; and, surely, by no *panic* terror. An Earthquake, that let loose a subterraneous fire, joined to a Heaven all in flames, tore in sunder the Foundations, destroyed the Workmen, and burnt up and consumed the Materials. Effects, which were all the objects of sense ; and, what is more, remained so for a long time. For many of those who survived their fellows, bore about them, the lasting marks of their punishment : And, another religious Revolution coming on, the site of the Temple was suffered to retain that face of ravage and combustion, which the escape of pent-up fires always leaves behind them^k.

ⁱ Φήμη ὅτι τὸν τόπον ἦγε τὰς πόρρω Διόγουλας.
Socrat. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 20.

^k Καὶ νῦν εἰς τὸν ἔλθης εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, γυμνὰ ὄψει τὰ θεμέλια· καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ζητήσης, εὐδεμίαν ἀλλ' ἢ ταύτην ἀκρίβεις. καὶ τέτα μάρτυρες ἡμεῖς πάντες· ἐφ' ἡμῶν γὰρ, εἰ πρὸ πολλῶν ταῦτα γέγονε χρόνος —
Chrys. adver. Judæos, Orat. 5.

IN this account then all Parties must needs agree. And, by what remains of Antiquity, it appears they did so: A consent, not procured in the way whereby *false* reports of the like kind have sometimes procured it. For this was no trifling event, laid in a remote corner, seen but by a few prejudiced relators, and accompanied only with ambiguous circumstances: In which case, partly from contempt of a thing incredible, partly from neglect of a thing uninteresting, but principally from an indolence that shuns the trouble of examining, many a Monkish Tale has made its fortune. But here, had the Fact been *groundless*, its falsehood must have been known to thousands: and what was so easy to be disproved, the interests of thousands would have exposed. Had it been *ambiguous*, it could not have passed uncontroverted: for it was not of the nature of the miracle procured by the prayers of the *Thundering Legion*, which only gave testimony to the *power* of Christ, a matter about which Paganism was very indifferent: This went to the quick, and exposed the impotence and *falsehood* of their idols, a charge which always put them out of temper. But if they were so cold in the cause of Superstition

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stitution as to need a spur to vindicate its honour, This they had likewise in the triumphs and exultations of the Christian Ministers; who in their Sermons, their Apologies, their Histories, addressed both to friends and enemies, *relate* the event in all its circumstances, *call* upon the numerous eye-witnesses to attest the truth, *appeal* to the standing marks of the fact, the traces of a dreadful exterminating fire over all the place, and on many of the persons concerned; and, lastly, *defy* the advocates of Idolatry to gainsay the exactness of their relation.

SUCH is the illustrious Miracle we have here attempted to defend. We have examined it on the severest rules of rational assent. And we find it established on that full concurrence of happy circumstances which, we might expect, should attend a miracle so *singular* in its nature, and so important and *decisive* in its use.

BUT there is one circumstance almost peculiar to it, and, as it crowns all the rest, will deserve our most serious regard. It is this, that the *attempt* and the *issue* are so interwoven with one another, that they must stand or fall together. For whoever
allows

allows that *Julian* began to rebuild the Temple, must confess the obstruction came from above, because no human impediment existed. And whoever denies the obstruction must deny the attempt, because if there was no obstruction of *this kind*, there was none at all: and if there were none at all, then was there nothing to be obstructed. That is, *Julian* never attempted to rebuild the Temple; an inference, whose scepticism would make sad havock in civil history.

HAVING then so well established the Fact, we have little need to inquire into the Objections that may be made to it, any further than as we may be led by our own curiosity, or inclined to gratify the curiosity of others, in seeing how far the capriciousness of wanton wit can go in its frolics to puzzle the plainest and most evident of useful truths.

SECTION II.

I. **F**IRST then it may be objected,
“ That the credit of the Miracle rests entirely on the truth of this supposition, *That the holy Oracles of God have declared, that the Jewish Temple should never*
I be

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be rebuilt : For if this were not predicted, the restoration of it did not impeach the divine veracity ; nor, consequently, was its honour concerned in frustrating the attempt. Now the word of God no where says that the *Jewish Temple should never* be rebuilt ; on the contrary, it insinuates that it *should*. It predicts, in general terms, the *total*, but not *final* destruction of the Temple ; and, in exprefs words, says, That *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles UNTIL the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled*. Which imply there was to be a period to the desolation, tho' the *time* be so obscurely marked as to make the fixing that period uncertain."

THE objection is plausible, and well deserves a solution. On which account (the method of the discourse concurring) it was thought proper to obviate it in the very entrance on this Argument : where it is shewn, from the nature of the Jewish and Christian Religions, that the *total* destruction, mentioned in the Prophecies, necessarily implied a *final* one : For that, in the order of God's dispensations, the Jewish and the Christian Religions could never stand together : when *This* became established, *That* was to be done away. But while the Temple

ple remained, Judaism still existed: when That was overthrown, the Religion fell with it; and consequently must rise again with the Temple's restoration. But as it was *not* to rise while Christianity continued, the Temple was *never* to be restored. The consequence of all is, that, if it were, Christianity could no longer support its pretensions, nor the Prophets nor Jesus the truth of their predictions.

II. SECONDLY, The testimony of *Amm. Marcellinus*, decisive as it is, hath been impeached. It is suspected, "That He is no *original* Evidence; but hath taken the account he gives us, of what then passed at Jerusalem, from the *Christian* writers. The work in which we find it, being composed near twenty years after the event, when the *Fathers* had turned what there was of fact into a Miracle; and, by their declamatory eloquence, had made it famous throughout the now *believing* Empire."

THIS reasoning abounds with absurdities: but the Objection is not of my invention.

IT supposes *Marcellinus* to have taken his account from the Christian writers, because

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there

there were no other to be had : for if there were other, then the Historian's authority does not rest on their testimony ; or, if it does, it rests on a good foundation, the evidence of Christian, supported by Pagan writers. Now is it likely that an Unbeliever, a man of sense, and a lover of truth, should so confide in those of the new Persuasion, speaking in their own cause, and unsupported by other evidence, as to deliver a fact, in terms of absolute certainty, which discredited a Religion he revered, and a Master he idolized ? Could we, under these circumstances, suppose him capable of preserving the memory of so unsupported a Story, we should at least look to find it delivered in such terms of doubt and suspicion as he must needs think were justly due unto it.

BUT the Objector seems to have attended as little to the *situation and circumstances*, as to the *character* of the Historian. When this event happened at Jerusalem, *Ammianus* was not in winter-quarters afar off in *Gaul* or *Germany* ; but near at hand, in the Emperor's court at *Antioch*, and in an office of distinction. The Objector, I suppose, will allow that *Julian* made the attempt. The attempt, I have shewn, was,
in

in its nature, such as must draw the attention of the whole Empire upon it. *Am-
mianus* represents it as one of the most considerable enterprizes of his Master's reign ; and that it was projected to perpetuate his memory. It miscarried. And is it possible the 'cause of the miscarriage could, at that time, be more a secret to him than the undertaking? Yet, if we believe the Objector, the first news he heard of it was from the Christian Priests. Be it so. I ask no more, to shew the objection devoid of common sense. A Courtier of credit, a curious observer of what passed about him, hears nothing of what happened in his neighbourhood, at the time it did happen, tho' in an affair that engaged all men's attention. Many years after, in hunting for materials to compose his History, he starts this Story. And where, I pray, does he find it, but skulking in the cover of a flowery Homily, or a thorny and perplexed Invective? and on the authority of these loose and prejudiced Declaimers, records it, in his *Annals*, as a fact unquestionable. Not, as was said, to derive credit to his Master or his Religion, but to entail eternal dishonour upon both : And all this without giving either of them the least

relief; as was easy to be done by only telling from whom he had his Story.

IN a word, we see, the objection arises out of this circumstance, *The distance of time between the fact and the historian's account of it.* But such a circumstance can never support a conclusion of this nature, but in the case where a Writer, who had an occasion to speak of a memorable fact at the time it happened, omits to do so; and afterwards, at the distance of many years, records it, without any reason given for his preceding silence. But this was not the case of *Am. Marcellinus*: he tells the story as soon as ever he had an opportunity of so doing; which was when he retired from business to write his History. And the distance between *that* and the event is so far from taking from the credit of his relation, that, as was observed, it adds greatly to it.

FOR we cannot but conclude, that, as a Soldier and man of business, he kept a journal of every thing that passed; tho' we should not suppose, what is equally probable, that as a lover of letters he had very early formed his design of writing history.

In

In what, therefore, concerned the transactions of those times, he had a sure and easy way of coming to the truth ; which was by comparing his own diary with the later, and better digested, accounts of others. But indeed the *nature* of the fact, and the *quality* of the Writer, shew us, there was little danger of mistake. An authentic account of this whole matter was doubtless amongst the papers of State ; to all which our Historian had free access. And if we should suppose his relation to be no other than a faithful abstract of *Alypius's* letter to *Julian*, we should not, I believe, be a great way from the mark. It is certain, that a prudent historian, circumstanced as *Marcellinus* then was, could not have acted a wiser part than to relate so nice an adventure in the very words of the person, to whose conduct it was committed : for in so doing, he found himself in that rare situation of adhering strictly to Truth, without offending either of the Parties who then strove for the possession of it. We may further observe, that this supposition clears up another Objection which has been made to his narrative. For,

III. THIRDLY we are told, " that the testimony of *Marcellinus* does but half our business : for tho' he gives a circumstantial relation of the fact, he speaks of it as a *natural*, not a *miraculous* event."

THE *former* objection, we see, supposes he had gone too far ; *This*, that he has not gone far enough. And yet I cannot understand how a professed Pagan could have said more, in conscience. This Objector, sure, is not so unreasonable to expect, he should have recorded the triumphs of the Gospel over his own Religion, in the words of the Christian writers, Because the other Objector had taken it into his head that he was beholden to them for his account of the story.

THUS far we may be certain, had *Ammianus* thought it an artifice or imposture, he would have contrived to tell us so. For what should hinder him ? Not any regard to the Leaders of the Christian sect, upon whom the scandal would have fallen ; for he is not backward, on any occasion, to expose their follies and perversities. On the other hand, the general Character of Paganism made him very easy not to form any distinct judgment about the matter. Had he had any
such

such inclination, he was fairly invited to it by what he found, and therefore honestly related, of the *obstinacy* of the eruption, *resolutely* bent to drive them to a distance^a.

AFTER all, A faithful Historian, thus circumstanced, must be sufficiently distressed.

BUT *Ammianus* his skill was great, like his honesty ; and he found a way to disengage himself with honour. Other considerations away, The fact was too notorious to be smothered, and too important to be passed over : at the same time, the mention of it was nice and delicate ; it was like walking over the burning ruins of an unquenched conflagration. Two things, in it, equally required management, the *motive to the attempt* ; and the *nature of the defeat* : the one affected the glory of his master ; the other, the interests of his Religion. See, now, his address, and how artfully he has come off ! *Julian* gave different reasons for his project, as best suited the views he had on those to whom he told it. To the *Jews* he affected compassion for their

^a Hocque modo elemento *destinatus* repellente, cessavit inceptum.

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sufferings, and reverence for their holy rites : To his *Priests* and *Sophists*, we may be confident, he revealed his secret purpose, the disgrace and ruin of Revelation ; And to his *Courtiers* and *Military* men he pretended, what was most to their humour, the fame and glory of the enterprize. Tho' *Ammianus* was certainly no Dupe to his professions, yet he found it convenient, and he thought it fair, to convey that motive to posterity, which *Julian* had given to himself. The *defeat* was next to be considered. To own the miracle, would be condemning his *Religion* ; explicitly to deny it, would be violating his *Honour*. He avoided this dilemma, by employing the words of the original Relator : And when we see, in his account, the very language of *Alypius*, we can no more doubt that he did employ them, than that *Alypius* himself sent his master a relation of the whole affair.

BUT if the necessity of saying so much distressed his *Principles*, the necessity of saying no more equally distressed his *Talents*. For his Genius was bold and over-bearing ; and prompt, on these occasions, to pour along the torrent of his eloquence. Hear how he describes

describes an earthquake at *Nicomedia*. —

“ *Eminuere Nicomediæ clades* --- But the reader will find the rest below ^b.

HE professes, we see, to tell his story *briefly and truly*. And I believe he did so. Yet his *brevity* does not hinder him from specifying the very day, nay even the hour

^b “ — *cujus ruinarum eventum vere breviterque absol-*
 “ *vam. Primo lucis exortu die nono kal. Septembrium,*
 “ *concreti nubium globi nigrantium, lætam paulo antè*
 “ *cæli speciem confuderunt: et amandato solis splen-*
 “ *dore, nec contigua vel apposita cernebantur: ita ocu-*
 “ *lorum obtutu præstriçto, humo involutus crassæ cali-*
 “ *ginis squalor infedit. Dein velut Numine summo fa-*
 “ *tales contorquente manubias, ventosque ab ipsis exci-*
 “ *tante cardinibus, magnitudo furentium incubuit pro-*
 “ *cellarum, et elisi literis fragor: hæc quæ secuti ty-*
 “ *phones atque præsteres, cum horrifico tremore terra-*
 “ *rum, civitatem et suburbana funditus everterunt. —*
 “ *Interim clamoribus variis excelsa culmina resultabant,*
 “ *quæritantium conjugium liberosque, et si quid necessi-*
 “ *tudinis arte constringit. Post horam denique secun-*
 “ *dam, multo ante tertiam, aër jam sudus et liquidus*
 “ *latentes retexit funereas strages. Nonnulli enim su-*
 “ *perruentium ruderum vi nimia constipata sub ipsis in-*
 “ *teriere ponderibus. Quidam collo tenus aggeribus ob-*
 “ *ruti, cum supereffe possent si qui juvissent, auxilio-*
 “ *rum inopiâ necabantur. Alii lignorum extantium*
 “ *acuminibus fixi pendebant. Uno ictu cæsi complures*
 “ *paullo ante homines, tunc promiscuæ strages eada-*

when

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when this or that circumstance was remarked : nor his *truth* from giving us as minute a description of the various kinds of deaths as may be found in a battle in *Homer*. How different from his relation of the event at Jerusalem ! There he does not so much as inform us of the *Month* in which it happened ; we should even have been at a loss for the *Year*, but that the Persian expedition, to which the form of his Annals connected it, has served for our direction. And so far is he from taking notice of any slaughter, the too certain consequence of eruptions of this nature, that, had it not been for the Christian writers, we might have suspected his *horrible balls of fire* ^c had contained nothing but a lambent flame.

AGAIN, he is not content to relate the *Nicomedian* earthquake, and expatiate only

“ verum cernebantur. *Quosdam* domorum inclinata
 “ fastigia intrinsecus ferebant intactos, angore et inediâ
 “ consumendos. — *Alii* subita ruinæ magnitudine op-
 “ pressi iisdem adhuc molibus conteguntur. Collis
 “ *quidam* capitibus, vel humeris præfectis aut cruribus,
 “ inter vitæ mortisque confinia, aliorum adjumenta pa-
 “ ria perferentium implorantes cum obtestatione mag-
 “ na deferebantur —

^c Metuendi globi flammæ.

on its *effects* : he is as particular in describing both the *signs* and *prognostics* that preceded it (such as the firmament overcast, and the day darkened with storms and tempests) and the *symptoms* that attended it, (such as the lightning and whirlwind.) But his account of the disaster in Jerusalem is stript of all these circumstances of terror; tho' they be the constant forerunners and attendants of fiery eruptions; and, if we may believe the Christian writers, did actually precede and accompany this: nor have we any reason to disbelieve them, because they speak (as we shall see) of certain phænomena, the natural effects of the disordered elements, which they erroneously ascribe to a different cause.

BUT this is not all, *Ammianus*, to give us the dreadfullest idea of this desolation at *Nicomedia*, says, the conflict of Nature was such, as if the God of Nature himself, armed with all the stores of heaven, was hurling his lightening over a perishing world. But we find not a single stroke of this imagery in the affair at Jerusalem. The Deity is there kept out of sight; tho' the repeated eruptions, which, he says, seemed *obstinately and*
reso-

resolutely bent to drive the workmen to a distance, drove him to the confines of a superior agency. But he was unwilling, and for a good reason, to call his Readers after him.

WHAT could occasion a conduct so different in a case so similar? Had he related the one as a noted fact, and the other but as an uncertain rumour, something might have been pretended. But, this makes the difficulty, he tells them both as facts; and facts of equal notoriety and truth. A difficulty nothing can solve but what we have already shewn to be the case, the bashfulness of a backward Evidence.

ON this principle, we see that his relating the eruption of Jerusalem as a natural event, takes nothing from the reality of the divine interposition. When a Pagan bears testimony to a fact of this importance, we may be as sure it is a *Miracle*, as when a Papist bears testimony to a miracle of no importance at all, we are sure it is a *Trick*.

BUT his *reserve* is so far from depriving us of the benefit of his testimony, that it is that which supports it. Had we found a
Pagan

Pagan speaking like a Christian Father on this occasion, his evidence had soon become as suspected as that of the Jewish historian, where he speaks of *Christ*; which, one of the ablest and most candid of his Critics frankly owns, could never come from him in the condition it is brought down to us. This miracle, without question, embarrassed *Marcellinus* no less than the Worker of miracles distressed the other Historian: whose case the excellent Writer just now mentioned, has well described. But had posterity made equally free with both, I should have despaired of disengaging my Author with the address and abilities he has done *Josephus*^d.

IN a word, all we want of our adversaries is to have the fact acknowledged as *Ammianus* relates it. Its nature depends neither on his, nor on their, nor on our opinion; but on the reason of things. We think, indeed, the nature of it speaks itself. But, for the sake of those who think otherwise, I pro-

^d See Mr. Forster's Discourse, intituled, *A Dissertation upon the Account supposed to have been given of Jesus Christ by Josephus &c.* Oxon. MDCCXLIIX.

pose, in the course of this examination, to shew, that it was an effect, which no power but that of the moral Governor of the universe was able to produce.

I PROCEED, then, in my subject; to which these cavils are only the prelude, or, as it were, the shadow of the good things to come.

IV. For the next Objection to the fact arises from what, one would have hoped, should have been the chief support of it, THE TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS. But their credit in the fashionable world is now so low, that if they do not dishonour the cause they appear in, it is all we are to expect from them. For, as a late writer* graciously allows us to believe every strange thing except a Miracle, that is to say, any the most extraordinary phænomenon in Nature, but where Religion lends it a support; so, to say the truth, we are enough disposed to credit the wonders of antiquity, all but those the *Fathers* have officiously pass'd their words for. And yet, it is very certain, these Fathers were, at worst, no more prejudiced in favour

* In a book, intituled, *Philosophical essays concerning human understanding*, printed 1748. p. 199.

of Religion, than their Pagan neighbours were prejudiced against it. And whether these were Philosophers, Sophists, or Statesmen, if we read their works, we shall find that very credulity, prejudice, false reasoning, and ill faith, which these objectors pretend has been discovered in some of the most celebrated *Fathers*. I say this only to shew, that this slippery temper was the vice of the times, rather than of the men; consequently that their character of *Fathers of the church* is not to answer for its irregularities.

BUT what is it the *Fathers* have done, in the point in question, that proves so injurious to their own cause? "Why, it seems, they differ greatly from *Ammianus*, in their relation of this extraordinary fact; by adding many circumstances to his; some of which are utterly incredible."

WHETHER it were the *Fathers*, or their *Cause*, which render their accounts incredible, will be seen in due time. At present let me observe, it greatly eases their defence, that it cannot be fairly pretended, the *Christian* writers *contradict* the relation of *Ammianus*, in any the least particular.

IN

IN the *second* place, What I said before, of *his subtractions*, I here repeat of *their additions* ; that they are so far from invalidating the fact, that they add to its support. We have shewn *Ammianus* to be an unwilling evidence, who has cautiously avoided saying more than was just necessary to save harmless his character of a faithful Historian. It was natural then to expect he had studiously omitted such circumstances as made most for the honour of that cause to which he was neither a friend nor favourer.

Thirdly, Admitting it was as is pretended, that incredible things are to be found in their relations : this circumstance will scarce be deemed sufficient to overthrow a well attested fact, by any who consider that those which are best established, have never been exempt from such injurious pollutions. The miracles of *Christ* and his Apostles have not escaped the adulterations of Monkery. And if this were sufficient to discredit Truth, there is not a fact in civil history that would stand its ground. As to those who expect a certain innate virtue in it, of force to extrude all heterogeneous mixture, they

they expect a quality in Truth which was never yet found in it, nor, I fear, ever will. Nay the more notorious a fact of this kind is, that is to say, the more eye-witnesses there are of it, the more subject it is to undesigned depravation; as there must be, amongst a large cloud of evidence, some men of heated fancies: and the greater the communication, and the frequenter the collision, of these warm heads, the more active and inflamed will be the creative faculty of the mind; which, in that state, we find, has always been the seminary of false circumstances of the prodigious kind.

BUT we should grant a great deal too much in allowing this to be the case here. Providence did not do its work by halves; nor was penurious in the grace so seasonably bestowed upon the suffering Church. For, what, we have shewn, was performed in the sight of all men, we shall see, was faithfully commemorated by the most celebrated Preachers and Apologists of *that* age; and as soberly and carefully recorded by the best Historians of the *following*. And if, travelling downwards in a blind and heavy road, it contracted some stains of the soil thro' which it passed, it was never so disguised as to have

those dirty features mistaken for its natural countenance, by any the least attentive observer.

THE Christian Evidence for the fact are GREGORY NAZIANZEN, AMBROSE, and CHRYSOSTOM. These lived at the time it happened. The next age produced RUFINUS, SOCRATES, SOZOMEN, and THEODORET, whose testimony is perfectly consistent one with the other. In the last place are PHILOSTORGIUS, THEOPHANES, OROSIUS, NICEPHORUS, ZONARAS, and CEDRENIUS, who, altho' distant in age, are so near allied in judgment, that they are here put together; not to add credit to the cause they serve; but, by separating them from their several contemporaries of a better paste and compound, to bear alone the shame of their proper folly or prevarication.

THE original evidence, as we said, are *Ambrose, Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzen*. Of these, *Ambrose* lived far in the West; and having, as may be supposed, received only a general relation of the fact, he delivers it as generally. *Have you not heard* (says he, writing to the Emperor Theodosius) *how when Julian gave command to rebuild the*
temple

temple of Jerusalem, the workmen were destroyed by a FIRE sent from God?

IN which may be discerned the different fortune that naturally attends *Truth* and *Falseness*. A Fable, the further it goes, the more circumstances it gathers: for, like all untimely productions, coming out, at first, rude and undigested, it leaves room for charitable invention to give it shape; which, by general contribution, soon raises it to a bulk that looks formidable. Whereas the circumstances of a story drop off, one after an-

^f This is in an epistle to the Emperor, written on a very singular occasion — A certain bishop had excited his flock to burn a Jewish synagogue: which being complained of to Theodosius, he ordered the offenders to be punished; and that the bishop should rebuild it at his own expence. The impiety of this sentence was so offensive to Ambrose, that, having reminded the Emperor of the fate of the Jewish Temple, he asks him, whether he does not expect the same dishonours should attend his command, which followed the attempt of Julian. “Non audisti, Imperator, quia cum jussisset Julianus reparari Templum Hierosolymis, quod divino qui faciebant repagulum igne flagrarunt? Non caves ne etiam nunc faciat? Adeo a te non fuit jubendum ut Julianus hoc jusserit.” Ep. xl. It was well, this miracle was performed by God, to do honour to himself: Had it been to do honour to the bishops of his church, we see how little they deserved it! Here is One

other, as it advances in its progress, till it becomes strict, and contracted to its essence: for there being precision in the testimony of the evidence, and conviction in the nature of the fact, men, on its first appearance, are less solicitous, as they have less need, to support it by its circumstances, than to convey it by its essentials.

Chrysostom, indeed, was in the neighbourhood of the place. But, speaking to an Audience as well instructed in the affair as himself, tho' he had frequent occa-

who violates the civil peace, and invades the religious rights of his neighbour; and Another who supports him in so doing, on the authority of the miracle at Jerusalem. In which they either foully prevaricate; or grossly mistake the purpose of God's interposition. They represent it as intended for an example to the Magistrate to restrain the Jews from all exercise of their Superstition; when it was evidently for no other purpose than to support the truth of the divine predictions concerning the ruin of a certain temple. Theodosius was to expect the fate of Julian. And why? Because he was *supporting* those very rights of nature which Julian then *violated*: For the attempt to rebuild the Temple was but one of the many arts he employed to extirpate the Christian Faith by violence. But it has always been the *trick*, and has often proved the *folly*, of Intolerants, to place their miserable principle on such foundations as are found most of all to discredit it.

fion

sion to put them in mind of so distinguishing a mercy, yet always dwells in generals; just as he would have done in referring to the crucifixion, or to any other the most known incident in the Gospel. Thus, in his *Discourse against the Jews and Gentiles*, speaking of the desolate condition of the *Temple*, he says --- “ For in our times that Monarch, “ who exceeded all men in his malice to our “ holy faith, both lent the aid of the Imperial authority, and became an associate in “ the design. They began the work, but “ could make no progress; for a FIRE, bursting “ from the foundations, drove away, “ and dispersed all concerned in the undertaking^s. ”

THE only contemporary *Father*, therefore, from whom we can expect a detailed history of the event, is *Gregory Nazianzen*. For he, not living at a distance, like *Ambrose*; nor preaching, like *Chrysostome*, to those who knew every circum-

^s — καὶ ἵδ' ὅππ' ἑ γυνεῶς τ' ἡμετέρως ὁ πάντας εἰς αἰσέβειαν νικήσας βασιλεύς, καὶ ἔδωκεν ἐξουσίαν τότε καὶ ζωέπραξε, καὶ ἔργα ἠψάντο, καὶ εἰδὲ μικρὸν προσελθεῖν ἠδιωθήθησαν, ἀλλὰ πῶς ἅπ' ὅσων θεμελιῶν ἐκπηδήσαν πάντας αὐτοῖς ἀπήλασεν. *Adversus Judæos et Gentiles*, tom. i.

stance, but residing in these quarters, and writing in defense of our holy faith, against *Julian*, in an appeal to the Roman Empire, was both qualified, by his knowledge, and called upon, by the nature of his performance, to be particular in his relation of the fact.

Now, as his account must undergo a severe scrutiny, it will be but fair to give it in his own words. Speaking then of *Julian*, he says,

“ After having run thro’ a course of every other tyrannical experiment against the Faith, and, upon trial, despising all of them as trifling and contemptible, he, at last, brought down the whole body of the Jews upon us ; whom, for their ancient turn to seditious novelties, and an inveterate hatred of the Christian name, he chose as the fittest instruments of his machinations. These, under a shew of great good will, which hid his secret purpose, he endeavoured to convince, from their sacred Books and Traditions, which he took upon him to interpret^s, that now was come

^s I think Gregory uses the word *ἑρμηνεύειν* ironically, in the sense of pretending to interpret with a prophetic spirit.

“ the time foretold, when they should return
“ to their own *Land*, rebuild their *Temple*,
“ and restore the *Law* to its ancient force
“ and splendor. When these things had
“ been thoroughly insinuated, and heartily
“ entertained (for deceit finds easy admit-
“ tance when it flatters our passions) the
“ Jews set upon the work of rebuilding with
“ great attention, and pushed on the project
“ with the utmost labour and application.
“ But when now driven from their work
“ by a violent Whirlwind and a sudden
“ Earthquake, they fled together for refuge
“ to a certain neighbouring church (some
“ to deprecate the impending mischief; o-
“ thers, as is natural in such cases, to catch
“ at any help that presents itself; and others,
“ again, enveloped in the crowd, were car-
“ ried along with the body of flyers) there
“ are who say, the church refused them en-
“ trance; and that when they came to the
“ doors, which were wide open but a mo-
“ ment before, they found them, on a sud-
“ den, closed by a secret and invisible
“ hand; a hand accustomed to work these
“ wonders for the terror and confusion of
“ the impious, and for the security and com-
“ fort of godly men. This however is now

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“ invariably affirmed and believed by all,
 “ That as they strove to force their way in
 “ by violence, the FIRE, which burst from
 “ the foundations of the *Temple*, met and
 “ stopt them, and one part it burnt and de-
 “ stroyed ; and another it desperately maim-
 “ ed, leaving them a living monument of
 “ God’s commination and wrath against sin-
 “ ners. Thus the affair passed ; and let no
 “ man continue incredulous concerning this,
 “ or the other miraculous works of God. But
 “ still the thing most wonderful and illustri-
 “ ous was a Light, which appeared in the
 “ heavens, of a Cross within a Circle. That
 “ name and figure, which impious men be-
 “ fore esteemed so dishonourable upon earth,
 “ was now raised on high, and equally ob-
 “ jected to the common view of all men ;
 “ advanced, by God himself, as the Trophy
 “ of his victory over Unbelievers ; of all Tro-
 “ phies the most exalted and sublime. Nay
 “ further, they who were present, and par-
 “ takers of the miracle, we are now about
 “ to speak of, shew, to this very day, the sign
 “ or figure of the Cross which was then
 “ marked or impressed upon their garments.
 “ For, at that time, as these men (whether
 “ such as were of us, or strangers) were shew-
 “ ing

“ ing these marks, or attending to others who
 “ shewed them, each presently observed the
 “ wonder, either on himself or his neigh-
 “ bour : having a radiant mark on his body
 “ or on his garment ; in which there was
 “ something that, in art and elegance, ex-
 “ ceeded all painting or embroidery ⁱ. ”

ⁱ — ἐπεὶ ὅτι πάντα διεξελθὼν τὰλλα, καὶ πᾶν εἶδῃ
 καὶ καθ' ἡμῶν τυραννίδῃ, ὡς μικρὸν τι, καὶ ἀγλυνὲς ἀτι-
 μάσας, — τέλῃ ἐπαφῆκε καὶ τὸ Ιερουσαλήμ φῦλον ἡμῶν,
 καὶ παλαιὰν τε αὐτῶν κηφότῃα, καὶ τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν ἀνω-
 θεν ὑποσφυρόμενον ἐν αὐτοῖς μῖσθῃ συνεργὸν λαβὼν
 καὶ τεχνάσματι, ὑπερβαίνον τε δῆθεν ἐκ τῆ παρ' αὐ-
 τοῖς βίβλων καὶ ἀπορρήτων, ὡς νῦν αὐτοῖς ἀποκείμενον
 εἴη καλεῖσθαι εἰς τὴν ἐκείνων, καὶ τὸν νεῶν ἀναδείμασθαι,
 καὶ τῆ παλαιῶν τὸ κρεῖττον ἀνανεώσασθαι, καὶ ἀποκρυπλί-
 μῃ ὁνοίας πλάσματι τὴν ὑπὸ νοῦν, ἐπεὶ ὅτι ταῦτα
 ἐδιδόθη, καὶ ἐπεισεν. εὐκολον γὰρ εἰς ἀπάτην τὸ πρὸς
 ἡδονὴν ἅπαν, οἱ μὲν ὡς ἀναστήσοντες διανοῶντο τὸ ἱερὸν,
 καὶ χεὶρ πολλή, καὶ προθυμία πρὸς τὸ ἔργον ἐταλαιπώ-
 ρον — ὡς ὅτι ὑπὸ ἀγρίας λαίλαπτος, καὶ βροσμῇ γῆς
 ἄφνω συνελαθέντες ὑπὸ τῇ πλυσίῳ ἱερῶν, οἱ μὲν
 ὡς ἐκείνοις ὥρμησαν· οἱ ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς τοῖς τοῖς φίλῃ
 συμβαίνειν τῷ παρόντι χρώμενοι πρὸς βοήθειαν, οἱ ὅτι
 ἄλλως ταραχῇ συμπεριμένοντες, καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς συνεπι-
 πλύντες· εἰσὶ μὲν οἱ λέγουσιν, ὡς ἔδδὲ τὸ ἱερὸν αὐτὸς
 προσεδέξατο, ἀλλ' ἀναπεπλάμεναι προσελθόντες τῇ
 φύσει, ὑπερβαίνοντες ἐνέτυχον ἐκ τινος ἀοράτου καὶ
 ἀφανῆς διωάμεως, ἢ τὰ παλαιὰ τελελεργεῖ πρὸς τὴν

THIS

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THIS is the only christian contemporary writer who delivers the account of the miracle *differently* from *Ammianus Marcellinus*, that is, with *additional* circumstances. Let us see then what handle *he* hath given to the Objector.

BUT before we come to examine what he *really* affirms, and takes upon his credit

τῶν ἀσεβῶν κατὰ πλῆξιν, καὶ τῶν ὁσεβῶν ἀσφάλειαν. ὁ δὲ
ἀπαντες ἤδη καὶ λέγουσι πιστεύουσιν, ὅτι βιαζομένης αὐτῆς
καὶ Φιλονεικηνίας περὶ τὴν εἴσοδον, πῦρ ἔστησεν ἀπαντήσαν
ἐκ τῶν ἱερῶν καὶ τὰς μὲν κατέφλεξε καὶ ἀνάλωσεν — τὰς δὲ τῶν
καυρίων ἀκρότητάσας, σήλην ἀφῆκεν ἐμψυχον τῶν τῶν θεῶν
καὶ τῶν ἀμαρτωλῶν ἀπειλῆς καὶ κινήσεως. τὸ μὲν δὲ ποι-
ῆτο, καὶ ἀπισεῖτο μηδεὶς, ἔτι μᾶλλον ταῖς ἄλλαις τῶν θεῶν
διωάμεσιν. Ὁ δὲ ἔτι περὶ δοξότερον καὶ περὶ φανερότερον,
ἔστη φῶς ἐν τῷ ἔρχοντι τὸν Σταυρὸν περὶ ζαφόν. καὶ τὸ
πρότερον ἐπὶ γῆς ἀτιμαζόμενον τοῖς ἀθέοις, καὶ χῆμα
καὶ ὄνομα, νῦν ἐν ἔρχοντι δείκνυσι πᾶσιν ἐπίσης. καὶ γί-
νεσι τρόπαιον τῷ θεῷ τῶν καὶ τῶν ἀσεβῶν νίκης, τροπαί-
ων πάντων, ὑψηλότερον — ἐπιδειξάτωσαν ἔτι καὶ νῦν ταῖς
ἐοδῆταις, οἱ τῶν θαύματων ἐκείνης θαλάσσης καὶ μύσαι, ταῖς
τότε καλῶσημανθείσας τοῖς τῶν σαυρῶν σίγμασιν. ὅμως τε
γὰρ ταῦτα διηγῆτό τις (εἴτ' οὖν τῶν ἡμετέρων, εἴτ' οὐκ ἔτι
ξένων) ἢ διηγμένων ἤκακε καὶ τὸ θαῦμα ἐώρα παρ'
ἐαυτῷ, ἢ τῷ πλησίον γινόμενον καλίστερον ὢν, ἢ ἐκείνον
ὁρῶν πιστεῖον ἐν τοῖς ἐοδῆταις, πάσης ἰσχυρικῆς ψηφίδος,
ἢ περὶ ζαφόν ζωγραφίας ποικιλωτέρου ἐκ τέχνης τί γίνεσι.
Orat. iv. adv. Jul.

to support ; it will be proper to set in a true light what he is only *supposed* to affirm, and what he does not undertake to warrant.

HE tells us, it was reported, that *those who fled for refuge to an adjoining church, whose doors were wide open but a moment before, found them suddenly closed by an invisible power.* --- And, without question, They who could not then get in, did believe the impediment to be miraculous. They did not consider, that a frightened croud, all pressing to be foremost, would soon choak up a wider passage than the door of a little oratory, like this where they sought for refuge, had the doors been still open. But he tells us they were suddenly *closed* : and, if they opened outward, the *power* that shut them could be only *invisible* to a blind croud, half frightened out of their wits. And, indeed, Gregory himself intimates, in the following words (where he speaks of the firey eruption) that this was not the general opinion ; and particularly not his own ; for he insinuates what he deemed to be the true cause of the impediment, in telling us *they strove to force their way in by violence.* But (adds he) that which followed, namely the eruption, *is now invariably affirmed and believed by all.* As
much

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much as to say, time and cool examination, which corrected the first reports, have left the miraculous circumstance of the *impediment* doubtful ; but have put that of the *eruption* out of all question.

THIS being premised, we come to the circumstances, additional to the account of *Marcellinus*. Gregory mentions three: 1. *a Whirlwind and Earthquake*. 2. *The Light which appeared in the heavens of a Cross within a Circle* ; and 3. *The figure of a Cross on the bodies and garments of the workmen and assistants*. These, indeed, Gregory delivers as unquestioned facts, doubted or contradicted by none : And of so trite, and frequent mention in the Divines and Historians of this time, that it is observable he tells the main fact, the *firey eruption*, not *directly*, but only hints at it occasionally, for the sake of a circumstance not so generally known. Of all these, therefore, it will be incumbent on us to give some good account. I shall try them on the test of *Ammianus's* relation, as that is made (though only for this purpose) the standard of the truth ; and doubt not but they will be *all* found very credible, notwithstanding their different degrees of evidence ;

vidence ; the *first* being necessarily connected with the eruption recorded by *Ammianus* ; the *second*, a likely attendant on the then unquiet state of the elements : and the *third*, very consonant to what we know of meteorology.

I. FIRST then, as to the *Earthquake*. Natural history informs us, that firey eruptions, of which it makes frequent mention, are always preceded by an *earthquake*. And, indeed, the obvious nature of the thing instructs us, it can hardly be otherwise ; the force of fire making its way thro' a heavy load, opposed to its explosion, cannot but throw the incumbent earth into convulsive struggles, during the agitation. And this tumult in the *inferior* elements must needs communicate itself to the adjoining parts of the *superior*. Hence it has so generally happened, that the disorder below has been accompanied with the like above, such as fierce *Whirlwinds* and a troubled sky : this was the first signal of the like dreadful conflict in the desolation at Nicomedia, as *Ammianus* himself relates it,--- “ Concreti nubium globi nigrantium, lætam paullo ante cœli speciem confuderunt.” Thus far, therefore,
Gregory's

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Gregory's account is not only agreeable to the usual course of things, in their unquiet state, but the appearances are told in their order ; the *whirlwind*, the *earthquake*, and the *fire*.

2. *The light which was seen in the heavens of a Cross within a Circle*, is the second thing we are to speak to. Of this kind of phenomenon, the *Ecclesiastical*, the *Civil*, and the *Natural* history, both of ancient and modern ages, affords us so many instances, that it will give us very little trouble. Not to keep the Reader in suspense, it was neither more nor less than one of those meteoric lights, in a still and clouded sky, which are not unfrequently seen in solar or lunar halos : And when the parhelia, and paraselenes, which sometimes attend them, are added to that appearance, we can easily conceive how greatly the pomp of them must be increased. To support this account, we may observe, that this celestial Cross was not seen till the conflict in the sky was over : it being the night after the Storm, and the night after that, as *Theodore*¹ informs us ; where, by

¹ — καὶ ὅτε αὐτὴ Νύκτις καὶ αὖτε πάλιν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ, ὡφθῆ ἐν τῷ ἔσθρῳ τῆ σωτηρίας σαυρῶς τὸ γῆμα Φωτοειδές.
Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 20.

the

the way, we may observe, this was a lunar halo.

IT was the same appearance, from whence (as *Eusebius* and others tell us) *Constantine the Great* drew the happy presage of an approaching victory: it was the same which *Cyril* of Jerusalem saw over that city, in the time of his son *Constantius*; to whom the good bishop sent the news, and, indeed, endeavoured to make the most of it. The Historians of the middle ages have, at different times, occasionally mentioned the like appearances; and, generally, mentioned them as miraculous. Since the revival of learning, the Naturalists and Astronomers have taken notice of such as happened in their times; and have attempted to explain their physical causes.

BUT here I find, what I had further to say, on this subject, already done to my hands, in a very ingenious and learned discourse^m of the excellent *J. A. Fabricius*: to which,

^m Intit. *Exercitatio critica, qua disputatur, Crucem, quam in cœlis vidisse se juravit Constantinus imp. fuisse phænomenon naturale in halone solari.* Vid. Bib. Græc. vol. vi.

with

with much satisfaction, I refer the Reader : For it is not my way to repeat what others have proved before me ; or to defraud them of the praises due to their discoveries.

I WILL only make one observation. All these meteoric crosses are represented as being encompassed by a luminous Circle. A circumstance, which, if but commonly attended to, would have betrayed their original. But so far from that, the *Circle* was brought as a convincing argument of their being miraculous. With this, *Gregory triumphs* ⁿ over the Mathematicians or Astrologers ; and defies them to account for it by their rules of art. Would the Reader know the ground of so gross a delusion ? It was no more than this, The *Circle* was so established an emblem of victory, that, like one of Epicurus's *Simulacra*, perpetually flying off from bodies, they regarded it as the *moral Phantom* that proclaimed *Julian's* defeat. For, figure and rhetoric, had, in most times, but especially in those, been an overmatch for reality and science.

ⁿ Πῶς οὐ τῶν ἔχεις ἢ ΚΥΚΛΟΝ ἐν τοῖς σοῖς Μαθημασι ; — Οὐτὸν ἢ Χρῆς ΝΙΚΗΣ ὁ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΟΣ.
Orat. iv.

3. BUT the last circumstance (say the Objectors) so far exceeds all the common lengths of credulity, that its invention must have put Fancy to the stretch, and even Fraud itself to the blush : and this is, *the mark of the Cross impressed upon the bodies, or garments of the people present.*

As extraordinary as this may seem, I do not despair of regaining those whom it hath most revolted.

BUT first it will be necessary to call in a Writer of the next Class, and consider his words---“ When therefore (says *Socrates*)^a “ vast number were assembled on the place, “ another prodigy happened ; for a FIRE “ FELL FROM HEAVEN, which consumed “ all the workmen tools^a.” As this Historian is the only writer who explicitly^b mentions

^a Παρόντων ἔν σφόδρα πολλῶν, ἕτερον τεράσιον ἐπὶ γίνεσθαι. πῦρ γὰρ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ κατασκήψαν, πάντα τὰ τῶν οἰκοδόμων ἐργαλεῖα διέφθειρεν. Socr. L. iii. c. 20.

^b *Philostorgius*, by the mode of his expression, and by the order in which he puts things, seems as if he meant this fire, in the following words ; τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ, πῦρ ἐπενέμετο τοὺς ἐργάζεσθαι τολμῶντας· τῷτο δὲ, σεισμὸς ἰχάννυνεν. Ex. Lib. vii. c. 9.

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Lightening, and its effects ; it will be proper to consider its credibility. Under the last head we have shewn, how a fiery eruption must occasion a previous earthquake ; and this earthquake, a stormy sky. But air, put into a violent motion, always produces *lightening*, when it abounds with matter susceptible of inflammation. And those columns of air, which lie over places that labour with convulsive throws to cast out an inkindled matter from its entrails, must needs be impregnated with vast quantities of sulphureous particles, which the earth, in that condition, exsudes from its pores, and which the solar heat draws upwards. But the natural history of these eruptions supports this reasoning. And *Ammianus*, whose evidence we have so often appealed to, gives us an example of it in the before-cited case of the *Earthquake* at *Nicodemia*, attended, as appears by his account, with a fiery eruption, like *that* at *Jerusalem*. Now this historian tells us, that there the earthquake was preceded by *Lightening*, as well as storms. — “ Concreti nubium globi
 “ nigrantium, lætam paullo antè cœli speciem confuderunt — Dein velut numine
 “ summo fatales contorquente manubias ventosque

“*tosque ab ipsis excitante cardinibus, &c.*
“*—hæcque secuti typhones atque preste-*
“*res, cum horrifico tremore terrarum.*”

LIGHTENING therefore, we see, is one of the constant concomitants in this Desolation.

Now lightening is formed by the ferment and explosion of sulphureous and bituminous exhalations from the earth, mixing with nitrous acids in the air. And as this mixture, or combination, is variously proportioned, according to the then casual concourse of elementary particles, so its destructive effects are various. Sometimes it hath been known to scorch up the cloaths without penetrating the body ; and, sometimes again, to break all the bones without discolouring the flesh or cloaths ; nay, even to melt the sword without injuring the scabbard. In the *first* case we must conclude, the sulphur predominated ; in the *latter*, the salts. And according to *this* proportion, the lightening in question seems to have been formed. For, they tell us, it melted the iron instruments, but hurt neither the cloaths nor flesh ; on which it affixed a cross, without any sensible notice

at the time of the impressi^on. For I make no scruple to affirm, that this mark was the natural effect of lightening, so constituted.

THAT lightening falls in regular figures, hath been frequently observed. The most unlikely, one should think, is a circle; and yet, in that, it hath been commonly known to fall: the most likely is an angle, (and a *cross* is but two straight lines meeting at right angles) yet this hath been more rare.

BUT, it will be said, "the Fathers make it a matter of much more importance; and the fantastic things they tell of these *Crosses*, exclude both Nature and Miracle; and admit of no other cause but Fraud or Fanaticism; even though we should substract from the account the contradictions that arise from their joint testimony. *Gregory*^c and *Socrates*^d say these *Crosses* were *shining* and *radiated*. And *Rufinus*^e gives us to understand, it was by night they had this

^c Κατάσερος.

^d Τῇ ἐρχομένῃ νυκτὶ, σφραγίσας σταυροῦ ἀκλινοειδεῖς.

^e In sequenti nocte in vestimentis omnium signaculum crucis ita evidens apparuit. *Hist. Eccl.* L. x.

appearance: yet *Theodoret* ^f tells us, they were not bright and shining, but shaded with a dark colour: again, *Rufinus* and *Socrates* affirm, they were by no means to be washed out ^g.”

ALL this, it must be owned, hath the rank air of inventive Prodigy. Yet view it well, and you see Nature breaking in upon you. In a word, the Fathers could have said nothing more corroborative of our account; which reduces them to a natural phenomenon: for the qualities they give to these crosses, not only shew them to be *meteoric*, but inform us of their very *specific* nature; which was precisely that of the PHOSPHORUS.

THEY shone by night, and were dark and smokey coloured by day (for thus, the different accounts of their appearance, given us by *Gregory* and *Theodoret*, are plainly to be understood): the very property both

^f Οὐκ ἔτι μέντοι Φωτοειδῶν, ἀλλ' ἐκ μελαίνης καὶ ἀσκειασμένων χειρῶς. L. iii. c. 20.

^g Ut etiam qui diluere pro sui infidelitate voluisset, nullo genere valeret abolere. *Ruf.* — ἀποπλύνειν καὶ ἀποσμήχειν θέλοντες, εἰδέναι τρόπον ἡδύναμιτο. *Socr.*

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of natural and artificial *Phosphori*. The *first* kind of which are insects, rotten-wood, shell-fish, tainted flesh, scales, feathers, of certain animals, &c. the *latter*, that solid body, in particular, made from urine (for almost all bodies will afford it) with which, if one writes, as with a pencil on paper, the letters will, in the night, appear like flame, and, in the day time, present only a dim, smokey suffusion.

THE reader will be further confirmed in this opinion, if he considers of what the *artificial Phosphorus* is composed; which is chiefly a fixed salt, obtained by a long process of fire; in the course of which much of this element seems to be imbibed; so as to give the minute parts of the phosphorus the proper motion and agitation to produce light. Now the salts were predominant in the lightening in question, as appears by its violent effects on metals, and its innocuous contact with softer bodies. And we can easily conceive how that high ferment, by which lightening is formed, may produce a *natural* phosphorus, in the same manner as a long process by fire makes the *artificial*.

THIS

THIS will account too for the difficulty in washing out the marks. Those on the bodies would sooner disappear ; those on the habits more slowly. And it is observable, that, though *Gregory* tells us, they yet produced (when he wrote) the marks on the garments ; he says nothing of those on the bodies.

AND now, I presume, the candid Reader may be disposed to abate his wonder, and inclined to give the *Fathers* credit for the facts, how much soever they might be mistaken in the immediate cause of them : and the Unbeliever, from the fate of so promising an Objection, may be taught the use of modesty and diffidence, when he opposes his own Reason to the truths that establish Revelation.

BUT to put the matter out of doubt, I shall produce a passage from the *Adversaria* of the famous ISAAC CASAUBON, written while in *England*, and, as his son *Meric* conjectures (to whom we are indebted for it) about the year 1610-11. It follows in these words : “ This day the lord bishop
“ of *Ely*^b, a prelate of great piety and ho-
“ lineſs, related to me a wonderful thing.

^b Doctor *Lanc. Andrews*, afterwards bishop of *Winchester*.

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“ He said he had received the account from
 “ many hands, but chiefly from the lord
 “ bishop of *Wells*, lately deadⁱ, who was
 “ succeeded by the lord *Montacute* ; that in
 “ the *city of Wells*, about fifteen years ago,
 “ one summer's day, while the people
 “ were at divine service in the cathedral
 “ church, they heard, as it thundered, two
 “ or three claps above measure dreadful, so
 “ that the whole congregation, affected
 “ alike, threw themselves on their knees
 “ at this terrifying sound. It appeared,
 “ the lightening fell at the same time, but
 “ without harm to any one. So far, then,
 “ there was nothing but what is common
 “ in the like cases. The wonderful part was
 “ this, which afterwards was taken notice
 “ of by many, that the marks of a CROSS
 “ were found to have been imprinted on the
 “ bodies of those who were then at divine
 “ service in the cathedral. The bishop of
 “ *Wells* told my lord of *Ely*, that his wife
 “ (a woman of uncommon probity) came
 “ to him, and informed him, as of a great
 “ *miracle*, that she had then the mark of a
 “ *cross* impressed upon her body. Which
 “ tale when the bishop treated as absurd,

ⁱ Dr. *John Still*.

“ his

“ his wife exposed the part, and gave
“ him ocular proof. He afterwards
“ observed, that he had upon himself,
“ on his arm (as I take it) the plainest
“ mark of a ✝. Others had it on the
“ shoulder, the breast, the back, or other
“ parts. This account that great man, my
“ lord of *Ely*, gave me in such a manner,
“ as forbade me even to doubt of its
“ truth ^k. ”

HERE, then, we have the very same event, happening from the same cause, the *burst of lightening*. The only difference is,

^k Rem miram mihi narrabat hodie Dom. Episcopus Eliensis, sanctæ pietatis Antistes. Dicebat se accepisse à multis sed præcipue à Dom. Episcopo Vellensi nuper mortuo, cui successit Dom. Montacutus: evenisse ante annos circiter xv, in Urbe Wella, five ea dicenda, Valla, die quadam æstiva, ut dum in Ecclesiâ Cathedrali populus sacris vacabat, duo vel tria tonitrua inter plura audirentur, supra modum horrenda, ita ut populus universus in genua *μῆδ' ὀρώμῃ*, procumberet ad illum sonum terribilem. Constitit, fulmen simul cecidisse, sine cujusquam damno tamen. Atque hæc vulgaria. Illud admirandum, quod postea est observatum à multis, repertas esse crucis imagines impressas corporibus eorum, qui in æde sacra tum fuerant. Dicebat Episcopus Vallensis D. Eliensi, uxorem suam (honestissima ea fœmina fuit) venisse ad se, et ei narrasse pro grandi miraculo sibi in corpore impressa ✝ signa extare; quod cum risu exciperet Episcopus, uxor, nudato corpore, ei probavit verum esse quod dixerat. Deinde

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that *here* the *cross* appeared upon the bodies only ; *there* both on the cloaths and bodies. A difference which the more or less subtilty of the meteoric matter would occasion.

THE fact, we find, is as well attested as a fact can possibly be. A bishop, of the greatest name in his time for virtue and knowledge, receives it from an eye-witness, and a party concerned, a bishop likewise of an irreproachable character, and tells it to a Man whose candid honesty and superior learning had rendered him one of the greatest ornaments of his age. This account his son, a man of learning likewise, and of approved integrity, finds under his father's own hand, in his *Adversaria*, and gives it to the world, with this additional information, that he, the son, who had been beneficed in *Somersetshire*, had never heard the fact questioned, but had frequently met with several who pretended to a perfect knowledge of it.

inde ipse observavit sibi quoque ejusdem + manifestissimam imaginem impressam esse, in brachio, opinor ; aliis in humero, in pectore, in dorso, aut alia corporis parte. Hoc vir maximus, Dom. Eliensis, ita mihi narrabat, ut vetaret de veritate historię ambigere. *Ex Advers. Is. Casaubon. apud Mer. Casaubon in tract. init. Of credulity and incredulity. p. 118.*

To

To this let me add, that Religion was here out of the question. Here was no Church or Churchman, no Sect or Doctrine, to be confuted or established, by the attestation of a prodigy. The great Critic speaks of it as a physical, though a wonderful event. The very Bishops deliver it to one another; and to him, as only an escape of nature. The Bishop's Wife indeed, at first, seemed planet-struck with superstition; and while she thought herself only distinguished with this badge of sanctity, was very willing it should pass for a *Miracle*. But the honest bishop laughed her out of this conceit: and when she found how small a part of the honour was likely to fall to her share, she seemed content to submit it to her husband's better judgment.

Now, as Religion and religious purposes had nothing to do in this wonder, that extraordinary Philosopher¹, once before quoted, will permit us to give it credit.

It is indeed so well proved, as to bear much weightier observations than any I have to lay upon it: what I have to say being only this, 1. That the two or three dreadful explosions perfectly agree with what hath

¹ The author of *Philosophical Essays*, &c.

been observed of the componency of that lightening which produces such an effect ; namely, that it abounded with nitrous and fixed salts. 2. The relation says, it was some time after that the Crosses were found upon the bodies of the patients ; and that the bishop observed one upon himself on talking with his wife about it. This may give light to a passage in *Gregory*, which has the air of mystery, and yet amounts to no more than what the simpler and less sublime pen of this modern critic, explains. The words of *Gregory* are these ; *As they were shewing these marks, or attending to others who shewed them, each presently observed the wonder, either on himself or his neighbour ; a radiant mark on his body or his garment.*

BUT suppose it should be said, “ That the circumstance of *Lightening*, on which we pretend to explain this Phenomenon, is not sufficiently established ; as it is mentioned but by one Historian ; and only in two words ; and by the name of a *Fire* from *Heaven.*” Whoever says it, will gain little, if his design be to invalidate the circumstance ; and yet less, if he thinks that the discredit of that circumstance will deprive us of the means of accounting for the

Crosses

Crosses. For it appears, from the nature of things already explained, that a *Fire* from *beneath* might produce this effect as naturally as a *Fire* from *above*. And from a relation, as well attested and notorious as the fact preserved by *Casaubon*, we have a famous instance of its having actually produced it. The excellent Mr. BOYLE, in his *Discourse of some unheeded causes of the insalubrity and salubrity of the Air*, gives us the following history from *Kircher* and others.—“ And that the subterranean efflu-
“ via may produce effects, and therefore
“ probably be of natures very uncommon,
“ irregular, and, if I may so speak, extra-
“ vagant, may appear in those *prodigious*
“ *CROSSES* that were seen in our time, *viz.*
“ in the year 1660, in the kingdom of *Na-*
“ *ples*, after the *eruption of the firey mountain*
“ *Vesuvius*; of which prodigies the learned
“ *Kircherus* has given an account in a par-
“ ticular *Diatribes*: for these *crosses* were
“ seen on linen-garments, as shirts sleeves,
“ women’s aprons, that had lain open to the
“ air, and upon the exposed parts of sheets;
“ which is the less to be admired, because,
“ as *Kircher* fairly guesses, the mineral va-
“ pours were, by the texture that belongs
“ to linen (which consists of threads crof-
“ sing

“sing one another, for the most part, at or
 “near right Angles) easily determined to
 “run along in almost straight lines, cross-
 “sing each other, and consequently to frame
 “spots resembling, some one, and some an-
 “other kind of *crosses*. These were *ex-*
 “*tremely numerous* in the several parts of
 “the kingdom of *Naples*; insomuch that
 “the *Jesuit*, that sent the relation to *Kir-*
 “*cher*, says, that he himself found thirty
 “in one Altar-cloth, that fifteen were
 “found upon the smock-sleeve of a woman,
 “and that he reckoned eight in a boy’s
 “band: also their colour and magnitude
 “were very unequal, and their figures dis-
 “crepant, as may appear by many pictures
 “of them drawn by the Relator; *they would*
 “*not wash out with simple water, but requir-*
 “*ed soap*; their *duration* was also unequal,
 “some lasting ten or fifteen days, and others
 “*longer, before they disappeared*.”

I. THE first observation I shall make on
 this curious narrative, is, that these *Vesuvian*
crosses appear to have been impressed only
 on the garments, and not on the bodies: just
 contrary to those, occasioned by the light-
 ening at *Wells*; which were on the bodies

^m Works of Mr. Boyle, in fol. Vol. IV. p. 293.

and

and not on the garments : while the *Julian* crosses appeared on *both*. The Reader, therefore, if he likes it, may suppose, without any absurdity, that in the case at *Jerusalem*, the crosses on the bodies were caused by the *Lightening* ; and the crosses on the garments, by the *eruption from the foundations*.

2. THE *Vesuvian* crosses were extremely numerous ; which agrees well with the relations of *Sozomene* and *Theodoret* ; the last of whom says, their garments were filled with them.

3. THESE *Vesuvian* crosses were hardly to be washed out : which exactly agrees with what *Socrates* and *Rufinus* tell of the same remarkable quality in the crosses at *Jerusalem*.

4. LASTLY, we understand, that the marks of some of these were of considerable duration ; as were those mentioned by *Gregory Nazianzene* ; which, he says, continued to the time he wrote.

So much then for the contemporary Evidence. In the next class are *Rufinus*, *Socrates*, *Sozomene*, and *Theodoret*. And all they add of miraculous to *Gregory's* relation, are these two particulars, 1. The *Lightening*,

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ing, or a fire from heaven, mentioned by Socrates. And, 2. This other circumstance, told us by Theodoret, that when they began to dig the foundations, and carry out the earth, an incredible number of people was employed all day long upon the work. But in the night, the earth, thus taken out, returned, of its own accord, from the valley into which it had been thrown^m.

THE case of the *Lightening* hath been considered already, where it was brought in to explain the nature of the *Crosses*. And, on that occasion, its close connexion with the rest of the *Phænomena* was examined and explained.

WHAT rests to be accounted for is only the *filling again of the foundations* with the earth that had been thrown out. And this appears to be one of those natural events, which, when mens minds are possessed with the idea of miracles (whether real or imaginary) they are wont to explain into

^m Ἐπεὶ δὲ ὀρύττειν ἤρξαντο καὶ τὸν χοῦν ἐκφορεῖν, πανημέριον μὲν τοῦτο ἔδρων μυριάδες πολλαί· νύκτωρ δὲ ὁ χοὺς αὐτομάτως ἀπὸ τῆς φάραγος μελετίθελο. Eccl. Hist. L. iii. c. 20.

prodigies.

prodigies : of the same nature and origine, doubtless, with that imagination in *Gregory*, that when the croud, which were tumultuously breaking into the church, had stopped up the passage, they were kept back by an invisible hand. For, take the fact as *Theodore* relates it, that the foundations were filled again ; and the valley, into which the earth had been thrown, was emptied ; Was any thing more natural than for an *Earthquake* to do both, if it did any thing at all ? The usual effect it is observed to produce, being an entire alteration in the face of things, such as the filling what is empty, and the emptying what is full. *Cassiodorus*, called *the Senator* (who abridged the *Tripartite History* which *Epiphanius Scholasticus* composed out of those of *Socrates*, *Sozomene*, and *Theodore*) smoothes what looked too rugged in this miracle, by the lightness and currency of his expression, *nocte vero spontanea terra de valle crescebat* ⁿ ; suffering his reader to go easily enough into the solution here given : In support of which it will be proper to observe, that the shocks of the *Earthquake* were repeated at different times. *Gregory*, we see, tells us

ⁿ L. vi. c. 43.

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of one which happened by *day*, when the labourers were driven for refuge to a neighbouring church. On the other hand, *Socrates* as expressly mentions one by *night* °: the very same which *Sozomene* speaks of (as appears from the similarity of the effects) in these words, *on the coming day, when they were to begin with the foundation, a great Earthquake happened* †: *Sozomene's* cast out stones from the foundation; so did that of *Socrates* ‡. It overturned a *Portico*, and crushed to death several who were then abiding in it: And this *Theodoret* expressly says happened by *night*, and to men asleep †.

THE *order*, or rather casual disposition of *Theodoret's* relation, is this, The mira-

° Δια τῆς νυκτὸς σεισμὸς μέγας ἐπιγεγόμενος. L. iii. cap. 20.

† Λέγεται τῆς ἐπιστῆς, καθ' ἣν πρῶτον θεμέλιον ἡμελλον ὑποτίθεσθαι, σεισμὸν γενέσθαι μέγαν. L. v. c. 22.

‡ Ἀνέβρασε τὰς λίθους τῶν πάλαι θεμέλιον τῆς ναῦ. Socrat.

Ἰπὸ δὲ κλόνος τῆς γῆς ἐκ βαθρων ἀναδοθῆναι τοὺς λίθους. Sozom.

† Καὶ δημόσιαι Στοαὶ ἐν αἷς κατέλυον αἰθρόον κατερμήσαν καὶ οἱ πλείους ἐγκαταληφθέντες, οἱ μὲν αὐτίκα ἀπώλοντο, &c. Sozom.

† Καὶ Νύκτωρ δὲ παμπόλλων ἐν τινι πελαζούσῃ καθ-
ευδόν-

culous filling again of the foundations—the dispersion of the lime and sand by tempests—the earthquake—after that the eruption, and then, for a close, the fall of the portico.

FROM hence I would observe, 1. That, though *Theodoret*, by the turn of his expression, would seem to insinuate, that the eruption followed the earthquake very speedily^t; yet we see by *Sozomene*, there was a considerable space between; sufficient to clear again the foundations from the ruin they had suffered^u. But lest it should be said (as it hath been observed there were shocks of an earthquake at *different* times) this might be what immediately preceded that eruption, it will be proper to take notice, that the reflection *Theodoret* makes upon it is the very same

ευδύνων Στοᾶ, καὶ νενέχθη μὲν αἰθρώως σὺν τῷ ὀρόφῳ τὸ οἰκοδόμημα· τοὺς δὲ καθεύδοντας συνέχωσεν ἅπαντας.
Theodor.

^t Πρῶτον μὲν σεισμὸς ἐγένετο μέγιστος — ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἔκ ἔδεισαν, πῦρ ἐκ τῶν ὀρυσσομένων θεμελίων ἀναδραμὸν, ἔσ. Theodor.

^u Ὡς δὲ σείων ἔληξεν ὁ Θεός, αὖθις ἐπειρῶντο τὰ ἔργου οἱ περιλειφθέντες — πάλιν ἀνήνυστο ἐπὶ ἑκάδαζον. λόγος ἦν ἅμα τε τὸ δεύτερον ἐνεχείρην τῷ ἔργῳ, καὶ πῦρ, ἔσ. Sozom.

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with, and, indeed, appears to be borrowed from, what *Socrates* makes on the earthquake, which he expressly says happened by *night*^x. Now, between this, and the eruption, he tells us, there was time sufficient for many to come out of the country to *Jerusalem*, whither the fame of the earthquake had brought them^y. But *Theodoret's* own expression helps us to ascertain the thing. He says, the fire broke out, ἐκ τῶν ὀρυσσομένων θεμελίων, *from the foundations which were ready dug*, in order to be built upon; which supposes what *Sozomene* says to be true, that there was time to repair the disorders which *that* shock of the earthquake had occasioned.

AND thus *Cassiodorus* understood him. For, speaking, as we observed above, of this miraculous return of the earth, he says, *every thing was prepared anew*^z.

^x Δέος δὲ ἐκ τῆς γενομένης Ἰσδαίης κατέλαβε. *Socrat.*

Καὶ τὰς παντελῶς ἀμυήτους τῶν θείων ἱκανῶς κατέπληξεν. *Theodor.*

^y Καὶ φήμη ἐπὶ τὸν τόπον ἦγε καὶ τὰς πόρρω διαγούσας, παρόντων δὲ σφόδρα πολλῶν, ἕτερον τεράσιον ἐπιγίνειαι. πῦρ γὰρ, &c. *Socrat.*

^z Nocte vero spontanea terra de valle crescebat. Solutis itaque prioris etiam fundamenti reliquiis, nova omnia præparabant. L. vi. c. 43.

By this time the Reader begins to see day, through the thick confusion of *Theodoret's* cloud of circumstances: in which, his addition of the wonderful, in filling again the works, amounts only to this, that an Earthquake, in the night, tumbled some earth into the *foundations*; and forced some out from a *valley* into which it had been thrown.

THE disjointed parts in *Gregory*, *Socrates*, and *Sozomene*, and which are still further distorted by *Theodoret*, the Latin Historian *Rufinus* fairly reduces to their place. "Behold, (says he) in the *night*, the last that preceded the day for laying the foundation, a prodigious earthquake arises, by which, not only the stones of the foundations are cast abroad and dispersed, but almost all the edifices, that were about the place, are thrown down and levelled. Public Porticos also, in which a great multitude of *Jews*, who were observed to push on the work with most vigour, had their abode, being thrown down, bury all that are found under them in

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“their ruins^a.” Thus *Rufinus*, by fairly *putting together* the several parts of one event, has shewn, that levelling the ground, and overthrowing the porticos, were the simple consequences of the earthquake: while *Theodoret*, by *disjointing* them, and delivering the effects separately, and without their common cause, has made two miracles out of one natural event.

THE Reader now sees what the FATHERS have to say on the occasion. He has had their testimony laid at large before him. Let us stop a moment then, and cast a general eye upon the whole. I persuade myself we shall see such a concurrence and consistency in the accounts of the TWO PARTIES; so perfect an agreement between the Pagan testimony, and the *first* class of Christian writers; so close a dependency between these and the *second* class; and such

^a Ecce, Nocte, quæ ad incipiendum opus jam sola restabat, Terræ motus ingens oboritur, et non solum fundamentorum saxa longeque lateque jactantur, verum etiam totius pene loci ædificia complanantur. Porticus quoque publicæ, in quibus Judæorum multitudo, quæ operi videbatur insistere, commanebat, ad solum deductæ, omnes Judæos, qui reperti sunt, opprèssere. L. x. c. 37, &c.

con-

a connection and enchainment of one fact to another, throughout the whole, as will force the most backward to confess, that the hand of God was of a truth in this wonderful defeat.

Ammianus Marcellinus, *Julian*, and *Ambrose*, speak simply of the firey eruption ; *Chrysostome* goes one step further, and tells us of its fatal effects. *Gregory* enters more minutely into the affair : he ushers it in with what is always found to be the precursors of this dreadful judgment, *Storms* and *Earthquakes* : and closes the scene with two meteoric Phænomena, likely enough to succeed it, though not so much indeed in the way of common observation.

THE following writers, *Rufinus*, *Socrates*, *Sozomene*, and *Theodore*t, add little to these relations. But the manner in which they tell their story, at the same time that it confirms, and explains the accounts of those who went before, proves they are not merely transcribers from their predecessors ; at least not from such of them as now remain ; which amounts to the same as if they themselves were original.

THUS, for instance, *Gregory*, indeed, mentions the *Cross* upon the Garments ; but it is to *Socrates* only, who speaks of the *lightening*, that we owe the knowledge of the *cause*.

So again, *Gregory* calls them *lucid* crosses ; but we are indebted to *Rufinus*, *Socrates*, and *Theodoret*, for the discovery of their specific nature ; who tell us, that they shone by night, were dark-coloured by day, and could not easily be washed out.

THIS will lead us to observe another mark of truth in these relations ; That the most wonderful circumstances, such as the *qualities* of these Crosses, and the lucid circle round the *aerial* cross (circumstances which might seem to be made at pleasure for the sake of the Marvellous) prove to be the very *qualities* which belong physically to their several natures.

NAY, where their prepossessions had led them to find Prodigies in accidents the most common ; as where *Gregory* ascribes the impediment to enter the Church doors to an invisible hand ; and *Theodoret*, the filling up the foundations, to be the re-
turn

turn of the same earth back to its post ; they have themselves honestly recorded those very *facts* which enable us to rectify their mistakes : Thus the *confusion* of the croud, which *Gregory* mentions, when they were endeavouring tumultuously to force their way, very naturally accounts for the impediment : and the *Earthquake*, *Theodoret* speaks of, could not but produce that new face in the foundations, which he took to be miraculous.

ONCE more. The *Fathers* indeed record many dreadful circumstances ; but then none of them prove false terrors. If there were *storms* and *tempests*, they do their work ; the sand and lime are dispersed. When the *Lightening* falls, the tools and instruments of building are consumed and melted. The *Earthquake* overthrows porticos. The *firey eruption* tears in pieces the foundations : and not one of these attacks upon Impiety, but what disperses, maims, or destroys the assembled workmen, and their Abettors. After this too we are told, the various effects it had upon the minds of all, how differently soever interested. This is of more importance than appears at first sight.

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fight. Invention and fable is not wont to go thus far. It may tell us of *appearances*; but it will never venture to speak of *effects*, which the hearer could immediately disprove. That which has a fairy entrance, has a fairy exit. Here the effects are mentioned that the truth may be examined. *Chrysostome* actually appeals, for the reality of the *eruption*, to the sight of the burnt and shattered foundations, and to the maimed and scorched survivors amongst the workmen. And they all of them might have appealed, for the reality of the *storms* and *lightening* (which dispersed the lighter materials, and consumed the heavier, together with the tools and instruments of work) to the conduct of *Julian* and *Alypius*. For what other possible reason can be assigned, not for deferring, but for giving up the whole enterprize ^b?

HAVING now discoursed so largely on the several circumstances of this event, and yet

^b Πισούθωσαν δὲ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ Ἕλληνες, ἡμίτε-
λές τὸ ἔργον καὶ ἀλιπόντες. SOZ. L. v. c. 22. Καὶ αὐτὸν
[Ἰσλιανόν] καὶ τὰς Ἰουδαίους εἰς ἐσχάτην ἀμη-
χανίαν καὶ αἰσχύνην κατέσβεψαντο. Philost. Hist. Eccl.
L. vii. c. 9.

(by

(by reason of the *occasional* mention of them) not having been able to preserve the order in which they happened ; it may tend to support, or at least to illustrate, what hath been already said, if we give a general view of them in one continued and connected relation.

AND here our principal Guide will be the *nature of the Phænomena* : for though the Christian Writers will not be useless, yet their perpetual violation of the order of time, makes it necessary to regulate their accounts on the reason of things.

IN excuse of their conduct, something is to be ascribed to the literary genius of those times, which was inaccurate and immethodical; something to the nature of their evidence, collected from discourses, where the mention of this illustrious event is only brought in to support some particular point of doctrine or morality then in question ; but the principal source of their neglect of order, was a false persuasion that every circumstance was miraculous, and out of nature. This hindered them from inquiring into the order of time, and would have prevented them from finding it, had they been disposed to
I inquire.

inquire. Besides, the *confusion* of time supported their *system* of the Miraculous, by separating the *causes* from the *effects* : and the *regulation* of it would have looked like an impiety, as seeking for that in nature whose source was only in God. This too will account why the fault was not reformed by the Historians who followed the original evidence ; and whose business it was to reduce, to order, the confusion in the occasional works of their predecessors. However, whether the miracles became *casually* multiplied by a neglect of chronology, or that they *purposely* neglected it, in order to multiply them ; Yet multiplied they were ; as we have shewn, in our inquiry into the *nature* of the circumstances. And nothing can better support the *truth of the reduction* arising from this Inquiry, than the placing each circumstance in the order in which it happened. This we shall now endeavour to do.

I. THE first signs the Almighty gave of his approaching judgment, were the *storms*, *tempests*, and *whirlwinds*. For the incumbent air could not but be affected with the ferment, at that time working in the earth, and exuding through its pores. These instruments

struments of vengeance performed their office, in the dispersion of the loose materials^c.

2. AFTER these followed the *Lightening*, the usual consequence of the clash and collision of clouds, driven forcibly together by storms and tempests. The effects this produced were, *first*, destroying the more solid materials, and melting down the iron instruments^d: and *secondly*, impressing that prodigious mark on the bodies and garments of the assistants. For what *Socrates* says is remarkable, that the *night after* (for this *lightening*, by his account, was in the *day*) the shining crosses appeared upon their garments^e: which was as soon as they could

^c Επειδὴ δὲ καὶ γύψα καὶ τιτάνη πολλὰς μεδίμωνων συνήθροισαν μυριάδας, ἐξαπίνης ἄνεμοι βίαιαι πνεύσαντες, πάσας ἀθρόως ἐσκέδασαν. Theod. Hist. Eccl. L. iii. c. 20.

^d Πῦρ γὰρ ἐξ ὈΥΡΑΝΟΥ κατὰσκηψαν, πάντα τὰ τῶν οἰκοδόμων ἐργαλεῖα διέφθειρεν. ἦν γὰρ ἰδεῖν ὑπὸ τῆς φλογὸς ἀπολλυμένας τὰς σφύρας, τὰς γλαρίδας, τὰς πρίονας, τὰς πελέκεις, τὰ σκέπαρνα, πάντα ἀπλῶς ὅσα πρὸς τὸ ἔργον ἐπιήδεια ἔχον οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι. Socrat. L. iii. c. 20.

^e Καὶ γὰρ τῇ ἐρχομένῃ νυκτὶ, σφραγίδες σαρξὶ ἀκτινοειδεῖς, πῶς ἱματίοις αὐτῶν ἐντετυπωμέναι ἐφάνησαν. L. iii. c. 20.

appear,

appear, with that eclat. But it may not be improper to observe, that *Rufinus* seems to have mixed together the fire from heaven and the fire from the earth ; for he gives all the effects of *both* fires, mentioned by others, to the single *one* he himself speaks of ^f.

3. THE *Earthquake* came next : which, *Socrates* says, happened in the *night* ^g ; that night, in which the marks upon the garments were first observed. Its effects were these, It cast out the stones of the old foundations (which gave occasion to a remark, that the prophecy of *Jesus* was now *literally* fulfilled) it shook the earth into the new-dug foundation (of which *Theodoret*, we see, made a miracle) and it overthrew the adjoining buildings and porticos.

^f *Ædes erat quædam*——in qua ferramenta aliaque operi necessaria servabantur ; e qua subito globus quidam ignis emicuit, et per medium plateæ percurrens, adustis et exterminatis qui aderant Judæis, ultra citraque ferebatur. Hoc iterum sæpiusque et frequentissime per totum illum diem repetens, pertinacis populi temeritatem flammis ultricibus coercebat---insequenti nocte in vestimentis omnium signaculum crucis, &c. L. x. c. 37.

^g Καὶ διὰ τῆς Νυκτὸς σεισμὸς μέγας ἐπιγενόμενος, ἀνέβρασε τὰς λίθους τῶν πάλαι θεμελίων, &c. L. iii. c. 20.

4. THEN followed the *firey eruption*^h, which destroyed and maimed so many of the workmen and assistants; and at length forced the undertakers to give over the attempt as desperateⁱ. But it is to be observed, that this eruption was attended both with *storms and tempests* above, and with an *earthquake* below^k. This Gregory, an original evidence, directly affirms; and it is altogether consonant to the nature of things. An earthquake could not but immediately preceed so violent an eruption; and it is highly probable, that this tumult communicated itself to the neighbouring air.

I MENTION this, because it contributed to the embarras we find in the accounts of

^h Λόγος ἔν αἷμα τε τὸ δεύτερον ἐνεχείρην τῷ ἔργῳ, καὶ πῦρ ἐξαίφνης ἐκ τῶν θεμελίων τῶ ἱερῷ ἀνέθορε, καὶ πολλὰς ἀνήλωσε· καὶ τῷτο πρὸς πάντων ἀδεῶς λέγε-
ται τε καὶ πιστεύεται, καὶ παρ' ἑδενὸς ἀμφιβάλλεται.
Sozom. L. v. c. 22.

ⁱ Ταῦτα οἱ ἀντίθεοι θεασάμενοι, καὶ τὰς θεηλάτας μάστιγας ὀρῶδῆσαντες, ἀπέδρασάν τε καὶ τὰ οἰκῆα κατέλαβον. Theodor. L. iii. c. 20.

^k Ὡς δὲ ὑπὸ ἀγρίας λαίλαπος, καὶ βρασμῷ γῆς ἀφυσουναθέντες ἐπὶ τι τῶν πλησίον ἱερῶν—ὅτι βιαζο-
μένους αὐτὰς καὶ φιλονεικῶντας περὶ τὴν εἴσοδον, πῦρ ἔσκησεν, Ἔc. Greg. Naz. Orat. ix.

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the evidence ; some of whom have confounded this *latter* storm and earthquake with the *former*. Another observation I would make, is, that, according to *Ammianus Marcellinus*, the fits of the firey eruption continued longer than the Christian writers represent the matter. Those of them who say the most, seeming to confine the eruptions to one day ¹, if we except the abridged account of *Philostorgius*, which intimates, they continued as long as any one attempted to go on with the enterprize ^m : and they would hardly desist for the impediment of a single day. It is absurd to suppose they did : and *Ammianus's* words clearly imply they did not ⁿ : consequently the eruption lasted much longer ; and continued to be repeated as often as the projectors began

¹ Επενέμελο μὲν ἔν ταῦτα τὸ πῦρ, δι' ὅλης τῆς ἡμέρας. Socrat. L. iii. c. xx. Hoc iterum sæpiusque et frequentissime per totam illam diem repetens, *pertinacis* populi temeritatem flammis ultricibus coercebat.

^m Τῷτο μὲν γὰρ, πῦρ ἐπενέμελο τὰς ἐργάζεσθαι τολμῶ νῆας· τῷτο δὲ, σεισμὸς ἐκώννυνεν. Philost. Hist. Eccl. L. vii. c. 9.

ⁿ Metuendi globi flammarum prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exustis *aliquoties* operantibus inaccessum : hocque modo elemento *destinati*us repellente, *cessavit* inceptum. L. xxiii. c. 1.

to renew the attempt, till it had fairly tired them out. This, the reader will find, is of importance to establish the divine interposition. Yet the *Fathers* are so impatient to be at their favorite miracles, the *Crosses* in the *Sky*, and on the *Garments*, that they slip negligently over what ought principally to have been insisted on, the FIREY ERUPTION; and leave what was truly miraculous, to run after an imaginary prodigy. The great St. Chrysostome, indeed, must be excepted out of this censure. He would not suffer the change to be put upon him; but judiciously lays the stress upon that which would bear it.

5. THE last appearance was *a lucid Cross in the heavens, circumscribed within a luminous circle*. Nature, put so suddenly into commotion by its Creator, was, on the despair and dispersion of his enemies, as suddenly calmed and composed. And then appeared, in the yet clouded firmament, this noble phenomenon in a lunar halo. And what could be conceived more proper to close so tremendous a Scene, or to celebrate so decisive a Victory, than the CROSS triumphant,

L . . . incircled

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incircled with the HEROIC Symbol of conquest.

THE *Order* here given to the several *parts* of this event, is further supported by *Marcellinus's* narrative of that parallel disaster, at *Nicomedia*; which, we have already employed, and more than once, tho' for different purposes, to illustrate the fact in question. And it is remarkable, the *Roman Historian* not only records the same circumstances, but assigns, to each of them, the same order of time. 1. It began with *storms and tempests*. "Concreti nubium globi nigrantium" &c. 2. Then followed the *lightening*. "Dein velut numine summo fatales torquente manubias" &c. 3. Then the *Earthquake*. "Horrifico tremore terrarum, civitatem & suburbana funditus everterunt." 4. And lastly the *firey eruption*. "Palantes abrupte flammaram ardores" &c.

THE order, so carefully preserved by *Marcellinus*, at *Nicomedia*, is, we see, totally neglected by the Christian Historians, at *Jerusalem*. And what but this could suggest so different a conduct? *He* related what he rightly understood to be *in the whole,*

whole, a natural event; *They*, what they falsely conceived to be, *in every part*, miraculous.

To conclude this head, let me observe, That, in an aggregate concurrent evidence, a minute *uniformity* on the one hand, or a real *inconsistency* on the other, equally tend to the discredit of the fact in question. In the first case, we justly suspect the *Evidence* to be concerted; in the latter, the *Fact* to be ill founded. Because, where men relate what they receive from one common Object, their accounts must be as various as the variety of the several recipients; which is just so much as to give a *different colouring* to the same Things, not to *alter* the Things themselves. When we see, therefore, the minutest uniformity in the colouring, we conclude them not be Originals, who fairly represent from nature, but Copyists, in concert, from one another. And where, again, that common Object, from which men receive their intelligence, is *real*, there, their accounts can admit of no inconsistency, because the nature of things is invariable. But if this object be the *creature of the imagination*, begot by the disordered passions, which

are always changing, the testimony of the deluded observers will never be secure from contradiction.

Now the *Christian Testimony* which we have examined, on this occasion, appears to be entirely free from both these suspicious circumstances. They tell it, indeed, in the whole, variously; but with a perfect consistency of all its parts. They shew, by this, they wrote neither in concert, nor at random; but drew from one common object, and an object that was real.

HAVING explained the *general cause* of that variety, in concurrent evidence, which most establishes its credit; it may be proper to consider, the *peculiar cause*, in the Evidence in question.

WHERE a notorious Fact consists of many circumstances, the observers, according to their different tempers and dispositions, will be differently affected. Some will be struck with *this* circumstance, some with *that*. Hence one man will speak of a cause without its effect: Another, of the effect without the cause. *This* relator will run two circumstances into one; *That* will
split

split one into two. And if, of these circumstances, there are some not rightly understood, the order of time will be neglected: and, from that neglect, another embarrass, in the evidence, will arise, a different order assigned by different Writers to the same circumstance.

LASTLY, let me observe, it is not *every appearance*, neither, of a *concerted agreement*, or *irreconciled contradiction*, that should make us lightly reject a Testimony of (otherwise) established credit. A single circumstance, in the event before us, will shew how easily, in either case, we may be betrayed into a wrong judgment. *Nazianzen, Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomene, Theodoret*, are so exact, and in so perfect agreement, about the *Cross upon the garments* (while each, in his turn, overlooks more material circumstances) that if we take it in the light they place it, of a great and amazing prodigy, we should be apt to suspect it only a studied ornament to their relation. Yet the finding, on examination, that the properties, they assign to these crosses, lead to the discovery of their real nature, this entirely acquits them of invention. Again, what

on the other hand, has a stronger appearance of *contradiction* than one of them affirming, that these crosses were *shining* and *radiated*; and another, that they were *sombrous* and *dark coloured*? Yet this apparent contradiction assists us in the discovery of one of their physical properties; and that discovery helps us to reconcile the contradiction; as we find they were black by day, and lucid by night.

I CHOSE to let this single circumstance supply me with the two instances of the *contrary* qualities, which equally render a concurrent evidence suspicious; because, in fact, these contrary qualities frequently exist together, in the testimony of *false Witnesses*.

WE come now, in the last place, to that refuse of evidence, which we threw together as of no account; *Philostorgius, Theophanes, Orosius, Nicephorus, Zonaras, Cedrenus*, and their fellows. These men have only the language of others, without any sense of their own; save, that like impertinent Players, they, sometimes, presume to add their own inventions to their Author's conceits;

conceits ; but no body is misled, for they always bear about them the marks of reprobation. Thus *Philostorgius* and *Theophanes* clap on a couple of senseless lies, to the well composed relation of their predecessors ; which stick out unsightly, like wens in a fair proportioned body, that can never be mistaken for its natural members,

THE first of them tells a story (which *Nicephorus* has repeated) of a certain cave laid open by the workmen in digging, in which was found the Gospel of St. *John*, miraculously preserved °. As this was apparently invented in favour of the *religion of reliques*, I shall deliver it up to the Inquisition of Dr. *Middleton*.

THEOPHANES's tale is something more substantial. He affirms, that the marks of the Cross were not only found at *Jerusalem*, but at *Antioch*, and other cities:

° Καὶ δὴ καὶ τῶν Θεμελίων ὑπερεπιζομένων, εἰς τῶν λίθων εἰς τὴν ἐσχάτην κρηπίδα τεταμένων κινηθεῖς, σόμιον ἄντρα τινὸς παρέδειξεν, ἐνεργασμένον τῇ πέτρᾳ, &c. — Ἐντυχάνει σήλη τι — ἢ τὴν χεῖρα ὀπλάτων δέσκει βιβλίον αὐτῇ ὀπκείμενον. Hist. Eccl. l. vii. c. 14.

L 4

where

where they appeared upon the coverings of the altars, on the Church books, and sacred vestments ^P. Well fare *Theophanes*, for a punctual relator. I fancy *Philostorgius* would have been puzzled to produce his miraculous *Gospel*: Yet, I make no question, *Theophanes* knew where to find enough of his manufacture of the Cross, to save him from blushing, had he been of so weak a complexion.

THE Reader has now the whole of the Church-evidence laid before him. It has been largely and minutely examined; and, I presume, so fully explained and vindicated, as to make it needless to take notice of any *particular* Writer, who hath objected to it.

YET the Observations of M. JAMES BASNAGE, on this collective evidence, are so very extraordinary, that it would be wrong to pass over in silence the censure of one

^P — αὐτομάτως τε τοῖς ἀπλώμασι τῶν θυσιασθειῶν καὶ βιβλοῖς καὶ ἄλλοις ἐσθήμασι τῶν Ἐκκλησιῶν, καὶ ἐν ἱματίοις ὁ μόνον Χρυσιανῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἰεδαίων ἐπεπόλαζε τὸ σημεῖον τῆς σταυροῦ, ὁ μόνον ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ καὶ ἄλλαις πόλεσι. Chronog. p. 44.

whose

whose Character is so very high in the learned world, though a great part of his objections hath been already obviated.

THIS very learned man, whose exactness, candor, and strength of reasoning have advanced him to the first rank in letters, hath, amongst his other excellent labours, enriched the public with a *History of the Jews*, from the beginning of the Christian Æra, down to the present times ; composed in a judicious method, interspersed with curious disquisitions, and abounding in good learning of every kind.

IN the sixth Book of this work, he gives us, what he calls, an *Examination of those miracles which defeated Julian's attempt to rebuild the Temple* : where, to speak freely, I find not one of those qualities, which have rendered him so deservedly famous amongst the Protestant churches.

AFTER having told us what share *Julian* had in the Attempt, and how easily he brought the *Jews* into his measures, he goes on in this manner.

“ IT

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“ It is said, that God hindered the building of the Temple, by three succeeding miracles. Three ancient Historians, SOCRATES, SOZOMENE, and THEODORET, unanimously relate these facts. And as to *Sozomene*, in particular, who is appre-

On dit que Dieu l'empêcha par trois miracles consecutifs. Trois Historiens anciens, Socrate, Sozomene, & Theodoret, rapportent unanimement ces faits. Sozomene même, qui a peur que quelques incredules ne les regardent comme fabuleux, renvoie ces incredules à la deposition des temoins oculaires, qui vivoient encore lors qu'il écrivoit. Le premier de ces miracles fut un Tremblement de terre, qui arriva lors qu'on nettoioit les fondemens de l'ancien Temple pour en jeter des nouveaux ; et ce tremblement de terre renversa les materiaux. Il y a deux variations sur ce premier miracle ; car Theodoret le fait precéder de je ne fai quelle vertu divine, qui raportoit la nuit les anciens materiaux & les ordures qu'on avoit ôtées, et en suite d'un vent miraculeux, qui dissipa les pierres, quoi qu'on eût jetté dessus une prodigieuse quantité de chaux et de ciment pour les affermir. Secondement, Sozomene fait mourir par ce tremblement de terre un grand nombre de personnes, qui étoient venues là en qualité d'ouvriers, ou de spectateurs, et qui furent ecrasées sous les ruines des maisons voisines et des porches, sous lesquels ils s'étoient retirez. Le second miracle fut un Feu, qui sortant des fondemens qu'on venoit de poser, consuma une partie des Ouvriers, et mit le reste en fuite ; l'un fait descendre ce feu du ciel, et les deux autres le font for-

“ hensive

“ henfive, there might be certain unbeliev-
“ ers, who would give no credit to them,
“ he fends fuch to the depositions of thofe
“ who had been eye-witneffes, and were
“ yet living when he wrote his history.

tir de terre. Socrate le fait durer un jour entier pour confumer les hoiaux, les peles, et tous les instrumens destinez à l'ouvrage. Sozomene raporte avec quelque incertitude *la mort des ouvriers*. Il marque même qu'on varioit un peu ; les uns affürent que le feu les avoit confumez, lors qu'ils avoient voulu *entrer dans le Temple* ; ce qui étoit impertinent, puis que les fondemens étoient à peine achevez ; & les autres soutenoient que cela étoit arrivé, lors qu'on commença à remuer la terre, et à la transporter. Il y a une quatrieme variation sur ce miracle ; car on ajoûte que les Juifs reconurent malgré eux que J. CHRIST étoit Dieu, et qu'ils ne laiffèrent pas de perseverer dans leur entreprise ; ce qui est contradictoire. Mais il n'importe : leur fermeté donna lieu à un troisieme prodige. Car ils s'aperçurent le matin qu'il y avoit un grand nombre d'étoiles raïonnantes semées sur leurs habits, qu'ils voulurent effacer sans pouvoir y réüffir. Sozomene y ajoute des étoiles qui étoient faites avec autant d'art, que si elles y avoient été mises par la main de l'ouvrier. Theodoret s'écarte un peu ; car au lieu d'étoiles raïonnantes il en met de noires, ce qui representoit mieux le crime & le suplice des Juifs, et à même tems il en fait écrafer plusieurs qui étoient endormis sous un Porche. Mais la grande variation roule sur l'effet de ce troisieme miracle ; car

“ THE

“ The *first* of these miracles was an
 “ EARTHQUAKE, which happened at the
 “ time they were clearing the old founda-

les uns affurent que les Juifs se retirèrent chez eux aussi endurcis que s'ils n'avoient rien vû. Mais les deux autres prétendent que la plupart se firent Chrétiens, et que le bruit de leur conversion alla jusqu'aux oreilles de l'Empereur Julien. Nous avons crû devoir remarquer ces différentes circonstances, à fin qu'on puisse mieux peser la vérité de ce récit. Les uns trouveront quelque plaisir à multiplier le nombre de ces miracles, comme Theodoret, et y ajouter même ce que les Ecrivains modernes en ont dit. Mais il est juste que les autres y trouvent aussi les raisons qu'on peut avoir de suspendre sa foi. J'ajouterai seulement deux choses. L'une, que la preuve que Sozomene allègue pour montrer la vérité de ce qu'il avance, est très foible. Il en appelle à *l'évenement*, & soutient qu'on ne peut plus douter de cette longue suite de miracles, parce que le Temple ne fut point achevé. Mais cet Historien avoit-il oublié que la permission ne fut donnée aux Juifs, que lors que Julien partoît pour son expédition contre les Perses, dans laquelle il fut tué, & qu'ainsi on n'avoit pas besoin de tant de miracles pour empêcher la structure d'un edifice ? L'oposition des Chrétiens, qui profiterent de l'éloignement du Prince, sa mort, et l'elevation de Jovien, ennemi des Juifs, suffisoient pour arrêter tout court ce dessein. D'ailleurs il renvoye ses lectures en termes vagues à des temoins oculaires, sans nommer, ni indiquer personne. Enfin Cyrille de Jerusalem, qui étoit alors Evêque de cette ville, devoit être sur les lieux, puis que ce fut lui qui

“ tions, in order to lay *new* : and this earth-
“ quake overthrew their magazines of ma-
“ terials.

rassura le peuple par le moïen d'un Oracle de Daniel, qui avoit prédit, à ce qu'il croyoit, que l'ouvrage ne réussiroit pas. Cependant Cyrille n'a jamais parlé de tous ces miracles. Ce n'est pas qu'il ne les aimât. Il écrivit, dit-on, à Constantin le Jeune, pour lui apprendre qu'il étoit plus heureux que son Pere, sous l'empire duquel on avoit trouvé en terre la Croix du Fils de Dieu, puis que le Ciel lui faisoit voir un prodige plus éclatant : c'étoit une Croix plus lumineuse que le soleil, que toute la ville de Jerusalem avoit vuë au firmament un long espee de tems. Pourquoi parler de cette croix, et se taire sur ces Miracles ? Il apprend aux Juifs qu'ils verront le signe de la Croix, lequel precedera la venue du Fils de Dieu, & ne dit pas un seul mot de celles qui avoient été attachées miraculeusement à leurs habits. Ce silence d'un Evêque qui étoit sur les lieux, qui aimoit les miracles et la conversion des Juifs, est suspect, lors qu'il n'y a que des temoins éloignez qui parlent. Cependant il ne faut pas dissimuler, que si un des Chronologistes Juifs soutient, que le Temple ne fut point bâti à cause de la mort imprevue de Julien, un autre assure que ce Temple, rebati à grands frais, tomba, et que le *lendemain un grand feu, qui vint du ciel, fonda les ferremens qui restoient, & fit périr une multitude innombrable de Juifs.* Cet aveu des Rabbins est d'autant plus considerable qu'il est injurieux à la Nation, et que ces Messieurs ne sont pas accoutumés à copier les Ouvrages des Chrétiens. *Basnage, Hist. des Juifs. Lib. vi. c. 18, 19.*

“ THERE

" There are two variations on the sub-
 " ject of this first miracle. For *Theodoret*
 " makes it preceded, 1. by I can't tell what
 " divine power; which, in the night,
 " brought back the old materials and rub-
 " bish into the place from whence they had
 " been taken: and 2dly, By a miraculous
 " wind, which dispersed the stones, tho'
 " they had been covered by a prodigious
 " quantity of lime and mortar, to bind them
 " into one solid mass. The second varia-
 " tion is in *Sozomene's* making this earth-
 " quake destroy *a great number of people,*
 " who were there in quality of workmen
 " or lookers on, and were buried under the
 " ruins of the neighbouring houses and
 " portico's, whither they had retired for
 " shelter.

" THE *second* miracle was a FIRE, which
 " burst from the foundations, they were
 " then preparing; and destroyed one part
 " of the workmen, and put the rest to
 " flight. 1. One of these historians makes
 " this fire to descend from Heaven; the
 " *other two* bring it from beneath. 2. *So-*
 " *crates* says, it continued the whole day,
 " and consumed the pick-axes, shovels, and
 " all

“ all the tools and instruments destined to
“ this service. 3. *Sozomene* relates the *death*
“ *of the workmen* with some uncertainty.
“ Nay, he observes, that here the evidence
“ varied a little ; some affirming, that the
“ fire destroyed them as they were striving
“ *to enter the Temple* (which was certainly
“ an idle story, since even the foundations
“ were hardly finished) while others say,
“ it happened when they first began to
“ break ground, and carry off the rubbish.
“ 4. There is a fourth variation on the sub-
“ ject of this miracle ; for it is added, The
“ Jews confessed, though in spite of them-
“ selves, that JESUS CHRIST was God ;
“ and yet they did not cease to persevere in
“ their attempt : a thing absolutely contra-
“ dictory to itself.

“ But no matter for that : their obsti-
“ nacy gave occasion to a *third* miracle. For,
“ in the morning, they perceived a great
“ number of SHINING STARS scattered over
“ their habits ; which they tried to efface,
“ but, in vain. *Sozomene* adds, there were of
“ these stars so artfully formed, that the
“ hand of a workman could not have done
“ them better : *Theodoret* deviates a little
“ here ;

“ here ; For, instead of the *shining stars*, he
“ speaks of *black* ones. Such as indeed
“ more properly marked the crime and pu-
“ nishment of the Jews. And at the same
“ time, he crushes to death a great num-
“ ber, who were fast asleep under a Por-
“ tico.

“ But the great variation of all turns upon
“ the *effect* of the third miracle. For one
“ assures us, that the Jews returned home
“ as hardened as if they had seen nothing :
“ whereas the other two pretend, that the
“ greater part embraced the Christian faith ;
“ and that the news of their conversion
“ reached even to the ears of *Julian* him-
“ self.

“ We have conceived it to be the duty
“ of a faithful Historian to take notice of
“ these differences, in order to assist the
“ Reader, in forming a right judgment of
“ the truth of the whole relation. Some,
“ doubtless, will find their pleasure in mul-
“ tipling the number of these miracles, like
“ Theodoret ; and even in adding every
“ thing which modern writers have said to
“ set them off. But it is no more than fit-
“ ting

“ting that men of a different turn should
“be made acquainted with the reasons
“there are to *suspend* their belief.

“I will only add, to what has been said,
“these two observations. The *one* is, that
“the Argument, *Sozomene* brings to prove
“the truth of what he advances, is a very
“weak one. He appeals to the issue; and
“maintains, we can no longer doubt of
“this long train of miracles, since the Tem-
“ple was never finished. But could this His-
“torian forget that the *Jews* did not ob-
“tain their permission to rebuild it till the
“time of *Julian*’s setting out for his *Per-*
“*sian* expedition, in which he perished?
“As this was the case, there was little
“need of all these miracles to hinder the
“*erection of a single building*; surely, a suffi-
“cient cause for cutting short an enterprize
“of this nature may be found in the op-
“position of the Christians, who might
“take advantage of the Prince’s absence in
“a remote region, of his death there, and
“the advancement of *Jovian*, who was an
“Enemy to the *Jews*. Besides, the histo-
“rian refers his readers, in a vague, inde-
“finite manner, to the eye-witnesses of the
M “fact,

“ fact, without pointing out one single person, by name.

“ BUT lastly, *Cyrill* of *Jerusalem*, who
 “ was, at that time, Bishop of the place,
 “ and must have been upon the spot, since
 “ it was he who confiding in a prophecy of
 “ *Daniel* (which had foretold, as he thought,
 “ that the attempt would prove unsuccessful) encouraged and animated the people to repose their confidence in God.
 “ Notwithstanding, this same *Cyrill* has
 “ never taken the least notice of these many miracles : and yet it certainly was not
 “ because he was no friend to miracles : We
 “ are told he wrote to *Constantine* the younger, to inform him, that he was more
 “ happy than his father, under whose empire the Cross of Christ had been found
 “ here on earth, since Heaven, to grace his
 “ reign, had displayed a more illustrious
 “ prodigy : which was, a Cross more brighter
 “ than the sun, seen in the firmament for
 “ a long time together, by the whole City
 “ of *Jerusalem*. Why, now, was that Cross
 “ remembered, and all these miracles forgotten ? He assures the *Jews*, they shall see
 “ the sign of the Cross ; and that it will
 “ precede

“ precede the coming of the Son of God ;
“ and yet, he says not one single word of
“ Those which had been miraculously af-
“ fixed to their Habits. The silence of a
“ Bishop, who was upon the place, who
“ loved miracles, and laboured for the con-
“ version of the *Jews*, looks very suspici-
“ ous ; while, at the same time, they, who
“ do speak to it, lived at a distance.

“ HOWEVER, it ought not to be dissem-
“ bled, That, if *one* of the *Jewish* Chrono-
“ logists maintains, that the sudden and
“ unexpected death of *Julian* prevented the
“ rebuilding the Temple ; *Another* of them
“ assures us it was rebuilt, and that, when
“ this was done at a vast expence, it tum-
“ bled down again, and *the next day, a*
“ *dreadful Fire, which fell from heaven,*
“ *melted all the iron instruments that remain-*
“ *ed, and destroyed an innumerable multitude*
“ *of Jews.* This confession of the Rabbins
“ is the more considerable, as it reflects dis-
“ honour on the Nation ; and these Gentry
“ are not wont to copy from the writings of
“ the Christians.”

BEFORE I proceed to a particular exami-

nation of this long passage, I shall make these two general remarks upon it.

FIRST, That the learned critic goes all the way upon a false supposition; namely, that it was the *purpose* of these *three Historians*, in their accounts of this event, to place the several circumstances, attending it, in the order of time in which each of them was supposed to happen. I have shewn they had no such purpose, and have explained the cause of their neglecting the order of time^r. This was fit to be taken notice of, because the main force in his objections arise from the contrary supposition.

MY *second* remark is, That the learned Critic embarrasses both himself and his Reader, by using, without explaining, the ambiguous term of VARIATION: which may either signify a *contradiction*; or, only a simple *diversity*. His reasoning requires you should apply it in the former sense; but his facts commonly go no higher than the latter. This was proper to observe, because a *contradiction* discredits a concurrent evidence: while a simple *diversity* never hurts, and often supports it^s.

^r See p. 139.

^s See p. 147, & seq.

HIS objection to the FIRST *miracle*, the *Earthquake*, is, that there are two *variations* concerning it.

THE one is, that *Theodoret* makes it preceded by *I can't tell what divine Power*, which, in the night, brought back the old materials and rubbish into the place from whence they had been taken: and 2dly, by a *miraculous Wind*, which dispersed the stones, tho' they had been covered by a prodigious quantity of lime and mortar, to bind them into one solid mass.

1. As *M. Basnage* himself here states the case, we see this is one of those *variations*, mentioned just before, that imply no *contradiction*, but a *diversity* only. A case almost essential to the truth of an accumulative evidence, not given in concert. The witness A delivers a circumstance omitted by B; and omits one delivered by him. Thus *Theodoret* is here said to relate two *circumstances* preceding the *Earthquake*, of which *Socrates* and *Sozomene* are silent: and *Sozomene* to relate an *effect* of this *Earthquake*, of which *Socrates* and *Theodoret* are silent. Now, not to repeat what hath been just observed of the credit which *these*

diversities carry with them : What can more strongly support the *reality* of this Earthquake, attested by three Historians, than that, when one had only recorded the principal fact, the other two preserved the memory of those circumstances, which, we have shewn ^t, an Earthquake was most likely to produce ?

2. BUT he might have improved this *variation* into a more plausible objection, by shewing that (on the *allowance* of his false supposition of an order of time observed in these accounts) it was a *contradiction*. And, considering he had this apparent advantage, it is strange he did not use it. For, in the order of *Theodoret's* relation, the filling up the foundations *goes before* the Earthquake ; whereas, from the accounts of *Ruffinus* and *Cassiodorus*, explained on the reason of things, it appears to have been *after*, and the effect of the Earthquake. But, as it hath been shewn^u, that the Historians had it not in their purpose to observe the order of time, the objection, even when thus stated, is seen to have no weight. However, let us, for form's sake, admit that they did indeed

^t See p. 128-9, and 109.

^u See p. 139.
differ

differ about the order of time in which each circumstance happened. What follows? Not that the facts themselves were false: but that the witnesses did not write in concert. Is not the whole body of civil History full of facts believed by all mankind; about the *order* of which, as they stand connected in time to one another, Historians do, and will eternally differ? Whether such an Enterprize was commenced before, or after such a Declaration made; whether such a March was performed, before or after such a Measure taken, is still in dispute. In the mean while no body doubts of the Facts themselves. And here the just distinction between a *natural* and *supernatural* fact hath no place. For M. Basnage's objection stands on a *civil*, not a *physical*, reason.

3. LASTLY, let me observe, the candid Critic should not have made *Theodoret's* miracles still more wonderful, by a false exposition of them. He tells us, this historian says, *a miraculous wind dispersed the stones, tho' they had been covered by a prodigious quantity of lime and mortar to bind them into one solid mass.* The whole affair, indeed, we think was one continued

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declaration of God's displeasure : but where he uses natural instruments to execute his judgments, they usually work according to their capacities : but this was a Wind with a vengeance. However, the best is, *Theodoret* says no such thing. His words are — “ And further, when they had laid
“ in on heaps many thousand measures of
“ lime and plaster, violent storms, whirl-
“ winds and tempests unexpectedly arose
“ and dispersed them all about *.” Here we find nothing told, but what this elementary agency might well perform. So that one cannot conceive what could induce this learned man, first to lay so strong an embargo on his heavy weight of stones, and then to disperse them again so lightly ; unless it was that, because, as he says, the *Fathers* loved to talk of miracles, so he loved to laugh at them. But he should have chosen a fitter season for his mirth.

His second variation about the *Earthquake* is, in *Sozomene's* making it destroy a great number of people who were buried under

* Ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ γύψος καὶ τῖάνη πολλὰς μεδίμνων συνήθροισαν μυριάδας ἑξαπίνης ἄνεμοι βίαιοι πνέσαντες καὶ σφόδριλοι καὶ καταιγίδες καὶ λαίλαπες, πάσας ἀθρόως ἐσκέδασαν. Hist. Eccl. l. iii. c. 20.

the

the ruins of the neighbouring houses and porticos. Here the *variation* is still more shadowy than in the foregoing instances. *Sozomene* is not even *singular* in the fact. *Theodoret* likewise delivers it; tho', by placing the firey eruption between the Earthquake and the fall of the Porticos, he has separated the *cause* from the *effect*^y. We shall beg leave then to place this instance amongst the *supports*, not the *objections*, to this illustrious Event.

THE SECOND Miracle, according to M. *Basnage's* representation of things, is *the fire from the foundations*: and concerning this, he assures us, there are no less than *four variations*.

THE *first* is, that *one of the Historians* makes this fire to descend from Heaven; the other two bring it from beneath.

THE assertion is grounded on a mere mistake of the text. *Socrates* speaks of *one* fact, when he says, "A fire came from Heaven and consumed all the workmen's tools^z;" *Sozomene* and *Theodoret*, of another, when they say, "A fire broke out of

^y See p. 131.

^z Πῦρ γὰρ ἐξ ὐρανόθεν κατασκήψαν, πάντα τὰ τῶν οἰκοδόμων ἐργαλεῖα δέφθιγεν. L. iii. c. 20.

" the

“ the foundations and destroyed many of the
 “ workmen themselves ^a.” And nothing but
 much prejudice, or little attention, could
 have blended *two consistent*, into *one incon-*
sistent fact. The fire from *heaven*, and that
 from the *foundations*, were different events :
 and distant from each other in time as well
 as place. All the mystery is, that *Socrates*
 mentions the first, and omits the latter ;
 and *Sozomene* and *Theodoret* mention the
 latter, and omit the former. The *nature*
of things ^b, as well as the rules of interpre-
 tation, supports our distinction : and, ac-
 cording to *that*, it had been more to be
 wondered at if the storms and tempests,
 spoken of above, had not produced *Light-*
ening, than if a *firey eruption* had not fol-
 lowed the Earthquake.

THE *second variation* is, *Socrates's saying*
that the fire continued the whole day ; and con-
sumed the pick-axes, shovels, and all the tools
and instruments destined to the service.

^a Πῦρ ἐξαίφνης ἐκ τῶν θεμελίων τῶν ἱερῶν ἀνέθορε
 καὶ πολλὰς ἀνήλωσε — Sozom. L. v. c. 22. — πῦρ ἐκ
 τῶν ἐρυσσομένων θεμελίων ἀνάδραμον, πλείους τῶν
 ὀρυττόνων ἐπέπρησε. Theod. L. iii. c. 20.

^b See p. 114.

THIS

THIS *variation* is as imaginary, as the fact, on which it rises, is false; namely, that *Socrates* here speaks of the *same* fire mentioned by *Sozomene* and *Theodoret*. For if he meant a *different* (as he certainly did) then its continuance for a *whole day*, is no *variation*, even in the lowest sense our critic uses it, of one writer's recording a Circumstance of the same fact, which another hath omitted.

A *third variation* (says M. Basnage) is, that *Sozomene* relates the death of the workmen with some uncertainty. Nay the historian observes, that here the Evidence varied a little. Some affirming that the fire destroyed them as they were striving to enter the Temple (which was certainly an idle story, since the foundations were hardly finished) while others say, it happened when they first began to break ground and carry off the rubbish.

THAT *Sozomene* relates the death of the workmen with some uncertainty is a strange misrepresentation of his words, which are these, *It is said, that a fire burst suddenly from the ruins, and destroyed many. And this thing is confidently reported and believed by all,*

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all, no one man ever calling it in question^c.
 Could a writer possibly express more confidence in a Fact related ?

INDEED, he does observe, that in *one instance*, tho' not in this the Evidence varied a little. A passage of Gregory Nazianzene ill understood apparently led him into this groundless remark. But if *Sozomene* mistook Gregory, M. *Basnage* has mistaken *Sozomene* ; and a great deal more grossly.

THUS stands the case. Gregory delivered his account of the eruption in these words — *They fled together for refuge to an adjoining Church—As they strove violently to force their way in, the fire, which burst from the foundations of the Temple, met and stop'd them ; and one part of them it burnt and destroyed^d, &c.* *Sozomene*, alluding to this passage (after he had told us, that the circumstance of the fire's breaking from the foundations, was *believed by all, and contra-*

^c Λόγος ἔν ᾧ τε τὸ δεύτερον ἐνεχείρην τῷ ἔρῳ, καὶ πῶρ ἐξαίφνης ἐκ τῶν θεμελίων τῆς ἱερᾶς ἐνέθορε, καὶ πολλὰς ἀνήλωσε· καὶ τοῦτο πρὸς πάντων ἀδεῶς λέγεται τε καὶ πισδεῖται, καὶ παρ' οὐδενὸς ἀμφισβᾶλλεται. L. v. c. 22.

^d See p. 103.

dicted

dicted by none) says, *Indeed there is this small difference ; some say the flame met them as they were forcing their way into the Church, and produced the effect spoken of above ; while others say, it happened when first they began to clear the foundations*^e. Now the Reader plainly sees, that *Sozomene* understood *Gregory's* meaning to be, that the flame which met those who were striving to enter the Church, happened at some time different from that which destroyed the men working at the foundations. But he certainly mistook *Gregory* ; who plainly supposes this destruction happened at the very time they were digging the foundations. *Gregory* not only assures us that the fact, as he tells it, stood *unquestioned* by all (which he could not have said, had it related to *another time*) but he expressly says, they fled to this Church as to a refuge from the *Whirlwind* and *Earthquake*. Now the Evidence is unanimous, that these things happened as they were preparing the foundations. In a word, what *Sozomene* mistook for a *variation*, proper-

^e — Πλὴν ὅτι μὲν φασιν ὅτι βιαζομένους αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ ἱερόν προΐεναι, φλόξ ἀπανήσασα, τὸ εἰρημένον εἰργάσατο· οἱ δὲ, ἅμα ἤρξαντο τὸν χοῦν ἐκφορεῖν.
L. v. c. 22.

ly so called, was two relations of the different parts of the same event. Great numbers fled from the *Whirlwind* and *Earthquake*; and these the *fire*, which burst from the foundations, destroyed as they were striving to enter the Church: Others stood their ground; and these were destroyed on the spot. Unluckily, *Sozomene* mistook *Gregory's* narrative of the *state*, in which the same eruption seized some of the sufferers, for the narrative of a *different* eruption. But tho' the ancient relators of this fact had indeed spoken of *different* eruptions, and ascribed the same general effect to all, *viz.* the destruction of the workmen; What then? Would this have taken off from the credit of their relation? By no means. On the contrary, it would have added to it. For we have seen in part, and shall see more fully hereafter, that the *fits* of this fiery eruption were so obstinate as not to give over till they had brought the Directors to despair of the Undertaking. But to return to *Sozomene*: an attentive writer might have fallen into *his* mistake: What drew *M. Basnage* into his, is not so easily accounted for. To interpret *Sozomene* as saying, that it was the *new-built Temple*, into which these unhappy sufferers

ferers strove to enter, when his whole narration shews, the foundations were never finished, implies, at least, that the Critic thought the Historian an Idiot, upon whom any thing might be Fathered. But *Sozomene* is able to speak for himself. He says, *the fire met them as they strove to enter εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, into the Church, or Temple.* And to know what place he meant by these words, we must have recourse to his Author, *Greg. Nazianzene*, from whom he took his account.

Now *Gregory*, in the relation already given at large^f, says, that when the *Jews* had procured the countenance and assistance of *Julian* to rebuild the Temple, they addressed themselves to the Undertaking with great alacrity and vigour ; but, being driven from their work by a Whirlwind and Earthquake, they fled for refuge to a certain neighbouring Church, ἐπὶ τι τῶν πλησίον ἱερῶν apparently a christian Oratory, built amongst, or adjoining to the ruins of those sacred places, formerly included within the walls of the Temple. This, then, *Sozomene* takes from *Gregory* : And what the latter expresses

^f Page 102.

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by ἐπί τι τῶν πλῆσιον ἱερῶν, the other calls εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν *into the Church*. Yet M. Bagnage will have it, *Sozomene* meant the *Jewish Temple rebuilt*. But perhaps, he might be mis-led into this strange interpretation, from what followed in *Gregory*; (which we now come to) who says, that while they were striving to force their way into this Church, a fire, ἐκ τῶ ἱερῶ, met and stopped them. The question is what he here meant by ἱερῶ; doubtless the same with ἱερῶν, going before, *the Jewish Temple*, near which the Christian Church or Oratory stood. But what *Temple*? Not a new one rebuilt, but the old one in ruins: ἐκ τῶ ἱερῶ signifying the same as ἐκ τῶν θεμελίων τῆς ναῦ, and with elegance; for ἱερὸν is the generic word, and signifies as well the site of a holy building as the building itself. It appears, at least, that *Sozomene* understood the word, ἐκ τῶ ἱερῶ, in this sense from his making all the variation in *Gregory's* account, from the rest to consist in his assigning a *different time* for the destruction of the workmen; and from his express word, that the Witnesses all agreed in attesting, that the fire came from the *foundations of the ruin'd Temple*. And it appears, he understood *Gregory* rightly; who affirms, that the evidence were *unanimous*

mous in attesting the fire came *ἐκ τῆς ἱερῆς*, by which he could mean nothing but the foundations of the ruined Temple; because it was in that only they were unanimous. Nor, for the same reason, could *Gregory* mean, nor could *Sozomene* so understand him, that the fire came from the Church, into which they were forcing an entrance. And *Gregory* seems to have well weighed what he says; for, in this very place, he carefully distinguishes between uncertain rumour and undoubted fact.

BUT, indeed, in every view, the learned Critic's interpretation is insupportable. The whole tenor of *Gregory's* relation (which is in perfect conformity with the rest) shews that the obstruction began *before* they had laid the foundations.

ON the whole, then, we see, *this variation*, concerning the eruption, is as imaginary as the rest.

Mr. *Basnage* proceeds; he tells us, there is a *fourth variation*, concerning this miracle of the Fire; which is, that *the Jews confessed, though in spite of themselves, that*

N

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Jesus Christ was God; and yet they did not cease to persevere in their attempt. A thing absolutely contradictory to itself.

THOUGH I would not call this a *contradiction*, yet I readily confess it to be highly improbable. However, be it what it will, the Critic is to answer for it alone. In a word, the charge is entirely groundless, not one of them affirming, or intimating, the least word of any such matter; but, on the contrary, plainly declaring that this *confession* of the *Jews* was not till they had *given up* the enterprize, as desperate.

THE words of *Socrates* are these: “ The
“ *Jews*, seized with extreme affright, were
“ forced, in spite of themselves, to confess
“ that *Jesus Christ* was God; yet, for all
“ that, they would not obey his will; but,
“ as men fast bound in religious prejudices,
“ still continued in their old Superstition.
“ Nor did a third miracle, which happened
“ afterwards (*the shining crosses*) bring them
“ to the true faith^f.” This historian speaks only of the *Jews*.

^f Ἰσθαῖοι ᾧ ἐν μεγίστῳ φόβῳ γρόμμοι, ἢ ἀκρίτες
ὡμολόγων τὸ χριστὸν Θεὸν λέγοντες, σὺν ἐποίειν ᾧ αὐτὰς
SOZO-

SOZOMENE speaks both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and in the order here named. —
 “ *Some* (says he) on the instant, judged
 “ that *Christ* was God, and that the resto-
 “ ration of the Temple was displeasing to
 “ him: while *Others*, not long after, went
 “ over to the Church, and were baptised.”

THEODORET, again, speaks only of the *Jews*; for, after having related the whole series of miracles, the last of which (in the rank he places them) was the Crosses on their garments, he goes on, in this manner: “ The
 “ enemies of God seeing these things, and
 “ fearing his hand now advanced, might
 “ fall upon themselves, fled away, and re-
 “ turned every man to his place; confessing
 “ him to be God, whom their forefathers
 “ had affixed to the tree ^h.”

τὸ θέλημα, ἀλλ' ἔμμενον τῇ τῷ Ἰσδαϊσμῷ προλήψει κρα-
 τέμμενοι, εἰδὲ γὰρ τὸ τρίτον θαῦμα τὸ ὕπερον δηγηρόμενον,
 εἰς πῶςιν τ' ἀληθείας ἦλθον αὐτές. — (Φερχίδες εἰσαγε-
 ἀκτινοειδεῖς — L. iii. c. 20.

ε — ποῖς μὲν αὐτίκα ἐκέρθη Θεὸν εἶναι τ' Χριστὸν, καὶ
 μὴ ὄρεσθαι τῇ ἀνανεώσῃ τῷ ναῷ, οἱ δ' ὅς, ὅς ἐς μα-
 κρὸν πρὸς ἐπὶ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἐμνήθησαν. L. v.
 c. 22.

^h ταῦτα οἱ ἀντίθεοι θεασάμενοι, καὶ τὰς θεηλάτας
 μάστιγας ὀρώδηςαντες, ἀπέδρασαν τε καὶ τὰ οἰκῆα καί-

Now let the impartial Reader but reflect, that this circumstance is related, by each of the historians, as happening *after* all the destructive interpositions, which hindered the work; and he must needs conclude, that M. *Basnage* has given a wrong representation of their accounts.

SOCRATES lets us know, in what their obstinacy lay: not in persisting in their project; but persevering in their superstition.

SOZOMENE only mentions their sudden *Confession*; and had he not opposed it to the lasting *Conversion* of the Gentiles, it must be owned, that, from him, we could conclude nothing of their obstinacy: but, as he hath so opposed it, we find his account to be perfectly conformable to the relation of *Socrates*; and discover even a hint in the words, καὶ μὴ δρεῶσθαι τῇ ἀνανεώσει τῶ ναῶ, that they did *desist* on their *confession*.

THEODORET is fuller than Either of them, and explains what might be, otherwise,

ἐλαβον, Θεὸν ὁμολογῆντες ἃ ὑπὸ τῶ προγόνων τῷ ξύ-
λῳ προσηλωθέντα. L. iii. c. 20.

thought

thought doubtful in Both. He marks the *obstinacy* of those, who (*Sozomene* says) *on the instant, concluded that Christ was God:* and the *despair* of those, who (*Socrates* says) *continued in their obstinacy.*

NOTHING can be clearer, or more consistent than this whole account of their behaviour. Yet *M. Basnage* is positive, They are represented as confessing *Christ*, and yet persisting in their attempt. It would be hard to think it a designed misrepresentation: and still harder to conceive how he could fall into an involuntary error, in a case so plain, unless we suppose he mistook the sense of *Socrates'* expression, ἐκ ἐποιῶν ᾧ αὐτῷ τὸ θέλημα, — *they did not obey his will*; as if it meant, they were not *obsequious to this declaration of his will in the prodigies*; whereas θέλημα is here to be understood in the usual theologic sense, of the *whole will of Christ*: as appears from what follows, which, by necessary construction, is explanative of what went before — ἀλλ' ἔρχον τῇ τῷ ἸΟΥΔΑΙΣΜΟΥ προλήψει κατ' ἕνα, εἶδε γὰρ τὸ τεῖνον θαῦμα τὸ ὕστερον ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων εἰς ΠΙΣΤΙΝ —

BUT here, perhaps, it may be objected, That even what we allow these antient Wri-

ters did say, creates a difficulty, which will deserve some solution. "The *Jews* are represented as confessing the divinity of "*Jesus Christ*, and yet persisting in their "old superstition: a state of mind made "up of very discordant principles." It is true, the objection will deserve to be considered; and the rather, as it is not impossible but this might be all M. *Basnage* aimed at; tho' he missed the mark by a careless expression. However, the objection is so obvious; and the account has, at first sight, so much seeming incongruity, that, I conclude, these Historians were well assured of their fact, before they would venture to trust it to the public judgment. And, when it comes to be examined, I persuade myself, *the reason of things* will give us the same satisfaction in its truth, which *concurrent Evidence* gave them.

If we admit these prodigies happened, in the manner they are related, we cannot but conclude, that those, against whom they were directed, how hardened and determined soever, must be seized with astonishment and affright. Now, in this state, the mind, hurried from its basis, catches at
any

any thing which promises protection. Nothing therefore was so natural as applying to the object *offended*; which, at that moment, could be thought no other than *Jesus of Nazareth*. His power, then, would, in spite of all old impressions, be instantaneously acknowledged. This is what *Socrates* means, and well expresses by saying, that, *in their extreme affright, they were forced, in spite of themselves, to confess that Jesus Christ was God.*

So far every thing was just as the working of human nature would be, when not hindered by any foreign impression.

BUT they must know nothing of its *workings*, who can imagine, that new and sudden directions, produced by such accidents, in minds warped by the strong attraction of inveterate prejudices, and hardened by a national obstinacy, could be permanent or constant. When the fright was over, the mind would return mechanically to its old station; and there it would rest; especially if it could find, or invent for its support, any solution of the phænomena consistent with their former sentiments concerning *Jesus*: and these, we shall see hereafter,

N 4

they

might, and did invent. So that now we are ready for the concluding part of the account, which *Socrates* hath given us of this matter.—*Yet for all that, they would not obey his will, but, as men fast bound in religious prejudices, still continued in their old superstition.* He talks, we see, like one who understood what he said ; — That their hasty *confession* was owing to their sudden *fright* ; and their fixed *impiety*, to their inveterate *habits*. All here is so much in order, that the contrary had been the unnatural thing. Had they told us, either that the *Jews* were *not* frightened into a *confession*, or that they *were* frightened into a *conversion*, the fact had been equally incredible ; because, the first case implied the absence of *passions* ; and the latter, a freedom from *prejudices* ; neither of which agreed with them, as *men* or as *Jews*. But they relate what was perfectly consistent with *both*, that their stubborn metal was softened in the flames, and grew hard again as these abated. And have we not many examples of the like behaviour in more modern Reprobates, who are in the other extreme of sticking to nothing. What sentiments of Religion have not been heard

to break from these, when in extreme danger ! and what remains have been found of it, after their escape ! The offended Deity, which they then saw dressed in terrors, is afterwards laughed at, as the phantom of a frightened imagination. And if *Free-thinking* can thus keep its hold, when it hath nothing to rely on but the mere vanity of its profession ; what must we think of *Superstition*, which hath a thousand fanciful resources to support men in an old habit ?

WE come now to what M. *Basnage* calls the *third miracle*. And, concerning this, he reckons up as many *variations* as in that which went before. But it will be proper first to see how he represents the miracle itself. His words are these, — *their obstinacy gave occasion to a third miracle. For, in the morning, they perceived a great number of shining STARS scattered over their habits.* His authority for calling these marks, *stars*, is *Sozomene* : who, indeed, gives them that name ; but, as I conceive, very erroneously ; from mistaking the sense of *Gregory Nazianzene*, whom he here followsⁱ. *Gregory's* words

ⁱ It appears he followed *Nazianzene* from what he follows
are

are, καλᾶσερⓈ ὦν ; which *Billius* translates, *stellatus nimirum ipse notisque distinctus* ; following the interpretation of *Sozomene*, who calls them downright *stars*, καὶ τρόπον τινα ἈΣΤΡΑΣΙ πεποικιλμένα τὰ ἐοδήματα εἶχον. But I apprehend, that *Gregory* meant no more by καλᾶσερⓈ, than that the mark had a star-like *radiance* ; not a star-like *figure*. And my reasons are, 1. Because he had just before affirmed, that these marks were *crosses* ; and, proceeding in his relation, he acquaints us with their quality, that they were καλᾶσεροι, or *shining*. A circumstance that would first catch the observation ; though, as we have shewn^k, it may be *naturally* accounted for. He uses the same term to express the shining feathers in a peacock's train — τὸ πλεον κυκλοφερῶς περιήσας τὸ χρυσαυγές ἔ ΚΑΤΑΣΤΕΡΟΝ^l — 2. *Socrates*, if he borrowed from *Gregory*,

ther observes of their elegant form : — ὡς ὑπὸ ἰσχυρικῆς φαινοίας κατεσιμμένα — *Soz.* — πάσης ἰσχυρικῆς ψηφιδⓈ, ἢ περιεργῆ ζωσφίας ποικιλότερον ἐκ τῆς τὶ γίνετ. *Naz.*

^k See p. 117, & seq.

^l *Orat.* xxxiv.

gives this sense to his words; or if he did not borrow from him, at least he teaches us how to understand him. His expression is *Ὁφειλόμεναι σταυροὶ* 'AKTINOΕΙΔΕΙΣ, *shining impressions of the cross*. They were like *stars* in *radiance*, but in *figure* they were *Crosses*. Nor do *Rufinus*, *Theodoret*, or *Cassiodorus*, who all remember the *crosses*, speak one word of *stars*; no not even *Theophanes*, who studied them well; and seems to have had the manufacturing of a spurious sort, in imitation of them.

WITH our Critic's leave, therefore, not to make the wonder greater than there is occasion for, we will call them *CROSSES*. And now let us see what he hath to object to them.

HE begins with an oblique remark for a prelude, — *these shining stars they tried to efface, but in vain*. This is said to insinuate discredit on the fact, by an accession of the wonderful. But we have shewn, that the difficulty of washing them out was a natural effect of their shining quality ^m, at least a property they had in common with other the like appearances in later times ⁿ.

^m p. 119.

ⁿ p. 127.

So that this will stand no longer in our way.

HE comes to his *variations*, by which, as we observed before, he sometimes means *additions*; sometimes *differences*; and sometimes, again, *contradictions*.

THE *first* is the lowest species of a *variation*, that is to say, an *addition*.—Sozomene adds, *there were of these stars so artfully formed, that the hand of a workman could not have done them better*. Sozomene, as we observed, borrowed this particular from Gregory. And if Socrates and Theodoret omit it, it was not because they were ignorant of it; much less because they disbelieved it. However, such as know that Nature frequently throws the mixed substances produced by fermentation, into regular figures, and often with such elegance of design, as Art can but lamely imitate, will have no reason to doubt of the truth of this circumstance, after it hath been shown^o, that the marks were entirely *meteoric*.

THE *second* variation is, that Theodoret deviates a little here; for, instead of the *shining stars*, he speaks of *black ones*. Such

as indeed more properly marked the crime and punishment of the Jews. These last words are added to shew the reader the ingenious turn of *Theodoret's addition* : and that he knew how to invent with judgment. But to leave his justification to the nature of the fact, which we are just coming to, when we have observed, that M. Basnage should here have changed his language, and used *crosses* instead of *stars* : for *Theodoret* does not intimate one syllable about *stars*. It is true, then, he does indeed say, that the crosses on the garments of the Jews were of a dark colour — ἐκ μελαίνης χροιᾶς — We have seen, that the matter of these crosses was of the nature of the Phosphorus, whose property it is to shine by night, and to be dark-coloured by day^d. Now if one Writer were to describe their appearance by night, and Another their appearance by day, must not This say they were *radiant and shining* ; and That, that they were *dark coloured* ? And so much for his *second variation*.

THE *third* is, that *Theodoret*, at the same time, crushes to death a great number

^d See p. 117, & seq.

196 *Of Julian's Attempt to rebuild who were fast asleep under a Portico.* The force of this objection, such as it hath, lies in the *time*. For as to the *fall* of the portico, *Rufinus* and *Sozomene* concur with *Theodoret*. But it is by no means true, that *Theodoret* says it was at the *same time*. If we suppose that he observes order in this incident, we must conclude the *fall* happened *before*. For the series of his relation stands thus — a portico fell by night — on the same night, and on the following, a cross in the sky — then the crosses on the garments ^p. The truth is, the fall of this portico had a very sufficient cause. *Sozomene* plainly intimates, and *Rufinus* expressly says, it was thrown down by the *first* earthquake which preceded the fiery eruption ^q.

WE come now to what the learned Critic calls the *great variation of all*.

WHICH, he says, *turns upon the effect of the third miracle. For one assures us, that the Jews returned home as hardened as if they had seen nothing: whereas the other two pretend,*

^p καὶ νύκτωρ ἐν τινὶ Στοᾷ — καὶ ἡ τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ αὖ πάλιν τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ ὤφθη ἐν τῷ ἔργον — καὶ αὐτὰ ἡ Ἰσραήλ ἐδῆμα — L. iii. c. 20.

^q See p. 133—4.

that

that the greater part embraced the Christian faith. And that the news of their conversion reached even to the ears of the Emperor Julian himself.

THIS, I confess, is to the purpose ; and, were it true, would be a considerable objection to the credit of their evidence. But the contradiction charged upon them is groundless and visionary. He who (our Critic says) assures us, that the Jews returned home as hardened as if they had seen nothing, is Socrates, whose words are these : “ The
“ Jews, seized with a horrible consterna-
“ tion, were forced, in spite of themselves,
“ to confess that Jesus Christ was God. Yet
“ for all that, they would not obey his will.
“ But, as men fast bound in religious preju-
“ dices, still continued in their old supersti-
“ tion : nor did a third miracle, which hap-
“ pened afterwards, bring them to the true
“ faith — They were hardened, there-
“ fore, according to the saying of the
“ apostle, and cast away the good which
“ was then laid before them ^r.”

^r Ἰσθαῖοι ᾧ ἐν μεγίστῳ φόβῳ γυμνοῦντο, καὶ ἀκούοντες
ὁμολογῶντες ὅτι Χριστὸν Θεὸν λέγουσιν· ὥστε ἐποίησεν ᾧ αὐτοῖς

THIS,

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THIS, indeed, is plainly declaring that the gross body of the *Jews* concerned in this attempt returned home religionless as they came; without either their *Temple*, or any holier worship. So far, then, is allowed; and he has it to make his best of; which he is willing enough to do, we see, for he takes notice, that the other two historians, *Sozomene* and *Theodoret*, contradict *Socrates*, and pretend, that the greater part embraced the *Christian faith*.

THIS now comes to be examined. But let me previously observe, 1. That both *Jews* and *Gentiles* joined in this attempt to rebuild the *Temple*; and had both of them the stigma of the *Cross* upon their garments, as *Gregory Nazianzene* and *Rufinus* inform us¹. Nay, from the Former we learn, it

τὸ θέλημα, ἀλλ' ἐμῶν τῇ ἑ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ προσλήψῃ κρα-
τύνουσι· ὅδε γὰρ τὸ τρίτον θαῦμα τὸ ὕστερον ὑπαγρυ-
μῶν, εἰς πῖσιν τῆς ἀληθείας ἤλθον αὐτὰς. — πεπώρων-
το ἐν κατὰ τ' Ἀπόστολον, καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐν χερσὶν ἔχον-
τες ἑρρίπτον. SOCR. L. iii. c. 20.

¹ Ὁπιδειξάτωσαν ἔτι ἃ νῦν τὰς ἐσθήτας, οἱ τὰ
θαύματα ἐκείναι θεαταὶ ἃ μύσαι — ὁμῶτε γὰρ ταῦτα
διηγείτο τις, εἴτ' ἐν τ' ἡμετέρων, εἴτ' ἐν τ' ξένων —
Naz. Orat. ix. — In sequenti nocte in vestimentis om-
nium signaculum crucis. Ruf. L. x. c. 37.

was impressed on the habits of such of the *believers*, likewise, as were present. And, indeed, but for this circumstance, the false miracle of *Theophanes* had never been invented, or at least had been differently constructed: for he covers the very church-books and sacred vestments with Crosses. But what is chiefly worth observing is, that this falling of the crosses *indifferently* on all parties present, confirms the physical account we have given of their nature. 2. My second observation is, That as *Socrates* records the effect this miracle had on the *Jews*, so *Greg. Nazianzene* records what it had upon the *Gentiles*: For this Father having insulted and triumphed over their Mathematicians and Astronomers on the subject of the aerial Cross; goes on to speak of *that* upon the habits of the persons present; and concludes his account in this manner, *So great was the astonishment of the spectators, that almost all of them, as at a common sign, with one voice invoked for mercy the God of the Christians, and strove to render him propitious with hymns and supplications. And many of them, without procrastinating, but at the very time these things happened, addressing themselves to our Priests with earnest prayers, were admitted into the*

O

bosom

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bosom of the church*, &c. Where we may
observe the different language of *Nazian-
zene* on this occasion speaking of the *Gen-
tiles*, from that of *Socrates*, who spoke of
the *Jews*. The First says, τὸν τὴν Χριστιανῶν
ἀνακαλεῖσθαι θεόν, the Other, — ἀκούεις ὡμο-
λόγην τὸν Χριστὸν θεὸν λέγοντες. The *Gentiles*
implored the protection of the great *God of
Heaven*, whom they had before neglected;
the *Jews* were forced to own that *Christ* to
be *God*, whom they had before rejected.

THIS being premised, we come now to *So-
zomene*; who, our learned Critic affirms,
hath contradicted *Socrates*, in *pretending that
the greater part embraced the Christian faith*.

I WILL give the passage of *Sozomene* en-
tire. *After these things*, says he [namely
the earthquake and firey eruption] *another
miracle happened more illustrious and wonder-
ful than the foregoing: for, on a sudden, and*

ἡ τοσαύτη τὴν ὀρωμένων κατὰ πληξίς, ὡς μικρὰ μὲν
ἀπαντίας ὥσπερ ἐξ ἑνὸς σιωθήματι καὶ μιᾶς φωνῆς, τὸν
τὴν Χριστιανῶν ἀνακαλεῖσθαι θεόν, ὡς φημίαις τε πολλαῖς
καὶ ἱκενίαις αὐτὸν ἐξιλάσκεσθαι. πολλὰς δὲ οὐκ εἰς ἀναβο-
λὰς, ἀλλὰ παρ' αὐτὰ τῶν συμβάντων προσδεσμονίας
τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἡμῶν, καὶ πολλὰ καλασθέντας τὴν τε ἐκκλη-
σίας γράει μέγας, &c. Orat. ix.

without

without human agency, every man's habit was impressed with the sign of the Cross. — The consequence of this was, that some, on the instant, concluded Christ to be God, and that the restoration of the Temple was displeasing to him. While others, not long after, went over to the Church and were baptised; and by hymns and supplications, in behalf of the guilty, endeavoured to appease the wrath of the Son of God^w.

As evident as it appears to be that Socrates spoke only of the Jews, and Greg. Nazianzene only of the Gentiles; so certain is it, that Sozomene, who took from both of them, speaks both of Jews and Gentiles.

HE says every man's habit was marked with the Cross. That is, as Greg. Naz. had said before, every man indifferently, whether Jew or Gentile. He then mentions the consequence of this prodigy, not

^w Ἐπὶ τῷ ᾧ καὶ ἄλλο ξυνηνέχθη, τῷ προσέειπε σαφές τε καὶ ὁδοξότερον· αὐτομάτως γὰρ πάντων ἡ ἐοδὴς τῷ σημείῳ τῷ σταυρῷ κατεσημάνθη — ἐκ τούτου δέ, ποῖς μὲν αὐτίκα ἐκρίθη θεὸν εἶναι τὸ Χριστόν, καὶ μὴ ὁρῶνται τῇ ἀνανεώσει τῷ ναῷ· οἱ δὲ, ὅτι εἰς μακρὸν προσέθεντο τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ ἐμυήθησαν, καὶ ὕμνοις καὶ ἱκεσίαις ὑπὲρ τῶν τετολμημένων αὐτοῖς, τὸ Χριστόν ἱλάσκειν. Eccl. Hist. l. v. c. 22.

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on the *Jews* only, but on the *Gentiles*.

ἐκ τούτων ὅ — And as it was reasonable to expect it would have a different effect on the different parties; he *first* speaks of what it had upon the *Jews*, that, *on the instant, they confessed Christ to be God*. This is no more than *Socrates* had said. They only differ in the manner of telling: For while *Socrates* goes on to inform us, in express words, that the confession was not *lasting*, and that they presently fell back into their old superstition; *Sozomene* contents himself to *lead* his reader to the same conclusion, by opposing this sudden flash of *conviction*, to the real and lasting *conversion* of the Pagans, recorded by *Gregory*. *Others* (says he) *not long after went over to the Church, &c.* From hence it appears, that *Sozomene* is so far from contradicting *Socrates*, on this article, that he lends him all the support a concurrent testimony can afford.

THEODORET comes next. And him too the learned Critic hath involved in the same charge of contradiction; but with much less pretence. For he, like *Socrates*, speaks only of the *Jews*; and, in such a manner too, as if he had *Socrates* all the way in
his

his eye. The whole of what he says is to this effect : — *The very garments also of the Jews were filled with Crosses — which these enemies of God seeing, and fearing that his hand now exerted might fall upon themselves, fled away, and returned every man to his place, confessing him to be God, whom their forefathers affixed to the tree**.

AND now, what is there that can countenance M. Basnage in saying, that *Theodoret pretends the greater part embraced the Christian faith*? Is not the *confession* he records the very same with that which *Socrates* tells us, so soon passed away in their returning infidelity? We conclude, therefore, against the learned Critic's objection, that, in this article, there is a perfect harmony amongst the three Historians.

BUT it will be said, perhaps, that in removing this objection, I make room for another that may prove more stubborn.

* Καὶ αὐτὰ ἡ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐσθήματα σαυρῶν ἐπεπλήρωτο, ταῦτα οἱ ἀνιήθεις θεασάμενοι, καὶ τὰς θηλάτας μάλιστα ὀρώσασαί τε, ἀπέδρασαν τε καὶ τὰ οἰκῆα κατέλαβον, θεὸν ὁμολογούσας τὸν ὑπὸ τῷ πρὸς γόνων τῷ ξύλῳ προσηλωθέντι. Eccl. Hist. l. iii. c. 20.

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“ For it seems incredible that so illustrious a miracle should have made no impresson on the *Jews*, and yet have had so considerable an effect upon the *Gentiles*. An objection, which seems to be redoubled upon one who hath affirmed^y, that a *Jew's conviction* of the truth of Christianity must, on his own notions, be necessarily attended with a *Conversion*: while that Gentile principle of *intercommunity*, did not imply the necessity of a Pagan's conversion under the same conviction.”

“ If, say the Deists, Christianity were accompanied by such illustrious and extraordinary marks of truth as is pretended; how happened it that its truth was not seen by more of the best and wisest of those times? And if it were seen (as it certainly was by *Ammianus Marcellinus*, *Macrobius*, and many others) how could they continue Pagans? The Answer is plain and strong. The truth was generally seen. But we have shewn, that the conviction of it, in a *new Religion*, was, with men over-run with so universal a prejudice [the principle of intercommunity] no reason for their quitting an old one. The case indeed was different in a *Jew*, who held none of this *intercommunity*. If such a one owned the truth of Christianity, he must needs embrace it.” *Div. Leg.* B. ii. § 6. see also B. v. § 6.

To

To this I answer, It is very true, that a Miracle performed before a *Pagan*, and not directly addressed to him, made, for the most part, but a small impresson on his religious notions ; because that general principle of Paganism hindered him from seeing, that the evident truth of *another* religion was an argument of the falshood of his *own*. It was different with the *Jew* ; who, being a worshipper of the true God, must necessarily regard his attestation, by miracle, not only as an evidence of the truth proposed, but as an obligation upon all men to embrace it. Hence the Apostle *Paul*, who best knew the different geniuses of the two opposed Religions, says, *The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom* : Σοφίαν, the religious principles of their philosophy ; amongst the chief of which was the doctrine of *intercommunity*.

HAD the *Jews* therefore considered this Miracle at *Jerusalem*, as *an attestation to the truth of Christianity*, they must have embraced it. And to affirm they did so consider it, and yet not embrace it, would be saying something strangely incredible. But this was not the case. In their fright they might

call out upon *Christ as God*; but when that was over, their prejudice regained its hold, and drew them back to their national superstition: however it could not have kept them there, but that it enabled them to find a purpose, in this Miracle, consistent with *Judaism*: Which was *God's anger* at their prophaning a work so holy by consenting to put it under the direction of a Pagan Emperor. This would be easily credited by those who had learnt from their sacred Books that an *Israelite* was struck dead but for stretching out his hand to uphold the falling ARK. When, therefore, they saw and felt these severe marks of the divine displeasure, to what would they ascribe it, but to their accepting the impure assistance of an impious Gentile to rebuild the House of the Divine presence: For could it be expected, when God had denied this honour to the *Man after his own heart*, because his hands were defiled with blood, that he would confer it upon a Pagan, a Warrior, and a declared Enemy to that Dispensation, a zeal for which was *David's* great merit with the God of *Israel*? We see, by the passage quoted above ^z from *R. Gedaliah ben Joseph Je-*

^z p. 69—70.

chaia, that some such solution as this enabled them to own the Miracle without blushing. But had they even wanted so plausible an evasion, yet their prejudices would not have suffered them to be delicate in a case where their all was in danger ; as appears by the bungling solutions they invented to evade the consequences arising from the Miracles of *Jesus*. Sometimes they ascribed his power (as the Gospel tells us) to the assistance of the evil Demon ; and sometimes, again (as the books of their Traditions inform us) to certain spells or charms stolen from the Temple of *Solomon*.

HOWEVER, tho' the Miracle at *Jerusalem* was too notorious to be questioned in that Age, and so was to be accounted for in the manner we have seen ; yet, in After-times, it was thought safer to *deny* it ; tho' still by the *modest* way of an implication. Thus (as we have seen above ^a) *R. David Gans*, pretends, that the miscarriage in the *Persian* war prevented the rebuilding their Temple — *Nam Cæsar in bello Persico periit*. Another of them invents a very different tale (for falsehood is rarely constant) and pretends

^a p. 49.

that a sly trick of the *Samaritans* made both the *Jews* and the Emperor, in their turns, disgusted with the project. But so silly a story will hardly bear the telling. However the Reader may find it below^b. — And in this manner too they treated the Miracles of *Jesus*: for tho', at first, they only ventured to evade their force, they at length came to deny their reality.

ON the whole, then, we see, That the inveterate *prejudices* of the *Jews*; their *obstinacy* in the wrong; and their *aversion* to the Christian name, would hinder a miracle from having its proper effect upon them, could

^b In diebus R. Jehosuah Hananiae filii, mandavit Imperator ut *Templum reaedificaretur*. Papus autem, & JULIANUS opiparas menfas præponunt *Judæis* à captivitate advenientibus (ad opus adjuvandum) ab Hako ad Antiochiam. Cutei vero seu Samaritani Imperatori asserunt, quod si Hierusalem refauretur, Judæos a contribuendis vectigalibus cessaturos, indeque ab illo defecturos; quibus Imperator; Quomodo inquit, licet mihi ab incepto recedere post mandati promulgationem? Ad quod Samaritani, Domine, inquit, præcipe ergo, ut locum prioris Templi mutant, vel ut augeatur aut diminuatur in longitudine vel latitudine circa quinque cubitos, itaque, nullo cogente, opus destituent. Huic sententiæ acquievit Imperator; atque juxta eam, novum misit Judæis mandatum in valle *Bet-Riman* aggregatis, quo audito, in magnum prorumpunt fletum, indeque

they

they but contrive either to put it *to* the support of their own superstitions, or, at least, to turn it *from* the condemnation of them. We see the miracle in question *might* be thus evaded. Who then can doubt but they *would* evade it? The consequence was, their continuance in error. The Christian writers tell us they did continue. And we now find, They say nothing but what is very probable.

THE *contrary* effect this Miracle had on *Paganism* is as easily understood. For tho' the principle of *intercommunity* supported a Gentile against the power of miracles at large, yet when he found one of them levelled at himself, as its direct ob-

furore perciti de defectione loquuntur; sed Magnates defectionis consequentiis valde perterriti, implorant a prædicto R. Jehosuah, ut populum alloquatur, eumque ad pacem adducere conetur, quod fecit sequenti fabulâ. Leo a frustulo ossis in ejus gutture infixio admodum afflictus, magnam spondet mercedem cuicumque molestum os ab ejus gutture averruncaret. Accedit Grus, os averruncat, & mercedem petit. Cui Leo, Jacta te ipsum, inquit, quod ingressus es in Leonis os in pace, & egressus es in pace. Sic, fratres, sufficit ut ingressi simus sub hujus gentis potestate in pace, & egrediamur in pace. Hæc sunt Beresit-Raba verba fideliter translata, ex fine cap. 64. Hoc accidit anno ab orbe condito circa 4833, secundum R. David Ganz in ejus Zemah David.

ject, the case would be altered. He would then feel the point in question brought home to him ; and the circumstances of affright and desolation (if, as here, the miracle was attended with any such) would keep off prejudice till Reason had passed a fair judgment. The *Jews* and *Gentiles* joined cordially in this project. The motive of the *First* was a *fond* desire to be restored to their Country and Religion ; but the motive of the *Latter*, a *malicious* purpose to give the lye to Revelation. And, assuredly, the *impression* on the defeat would be strictly relative to the *motive* of the attempt. They thought to dishonour the holy Faith ; and they added new credit to it. So that a *consciousness* of their intentions would add proportionable *facility* to their conversion. The *Jewish* evasion would not serve *their* purpose. At most, it could only make them waver between the *Church* and the *Synagogue* ; a state of no long continuance. *Sozomene* assures us it was not ; For he says that *soon after* *ὁὐκ εἰς μακρόν*, *they went over to the Church and were baptised.*

BUT, before we leave this subject, it may be proper to observe, That *general* expressions, relative to *Parties*, and *bodies* of men, are not to be understood *universally*.

Thus

Thus when the Historians tell us, *all* were marked with the Cross, They do not mean *every individual* present; but all indifferently, of every denomination. So again, when they say, the *Pagans* were converted, and the *Jews* remained hardened, They do not mean every particular man; but the far greater number in either party. And thus St. *Chrysostome* directs us to understand it, where he says, *That the Jews, for the most part, remained hardened*^c.

It is scarce worth while to take notice, that what M. *Basnage* affirms (of *Sozomene* and *Theodoret's* saying, *That the news of the Jews' conversion reached even the ears of the Emperor Julian himself*) is as mistaken as the rest. For *Sozomene* says nothing of the matter: and as to *Theodoret*, his words are as follows, *These things came to the ears of Julian, for they were cried up, and in the mouths of all men; but his heart was hardened like Pharaoh's*^d: where we see, by ταῦτα, he means the Miracles. For it was not the *conversion*, which was in the mouths

^c Tom. v. Orat. xlv. ^d Ταῦτα ἤκουσε μὲν Ἰουλιανὸς, ἀλλὰ πάντων γὰρ ἤδετο. τῷ δὲ Φαραὼ ἀπὸ πλησίως τῷ καρδίαν ἐσκήρυνεν. L. iii. c. 20.

of all men, but the *miracles*. And *Julian's* resisting these, was what made his case like *Pharaoh's*.

OUR Critic, having now well canvassed the matter, tells us for what purpose he hath been at all these pains ; *It was to supply those sober persons, who do not believe it, with arguments to fortify their doubts.* But as if something was still wanting to so good an end, he resumes his task, and says, he will add two observations more.

THE first is, That the argument *Sozomene* brings, to prove the truth of what he advances, is a very weak one. He appeals to the issue ; and maintains, we can no longer doubt of this long train of miracles since the Temple was never finished. But (says the Critic) has the Historian forgot that the Jews did not obtain their permission till the time of *Julian's* setting out for his Persian expedition, in which he perished? There was then little need of all these Miracles to hinder the erection of a building. Surely a sufficient cause of cutting short an enterprise of this nature, might be found in the opposition of the Christians, who might take advantage of the Prince's absence in a remote region, his death there,

there, and the advancement of Jovian to the Empire, who had an aversion for the Jews. Besides, the Historian refers his readers in a vague indefinite manner to the eye-witnesses of the fact, without pointing out one single person by name.

HERE are many things asserted, that will deserve an answer.

1. HE misrepresents the matter, in saying that *Sozomene* gives the unbuilt Temple as a proof of its being obstructed by a miracle. To such reasoning, indeed, M. *Basnage's* observation of *Julian's* absence and death &c. had been a good reply. But *Sozomene's* argument stands thus : The yielding up the place, and leaving the work imperfect, ἡμίτελος τὸ ἔργον καὶ ἀλειπόντες, is a proof of the miraculous interposition. Now, it is one thing to see a work unfinished ; and another, to know who left it in that condition. From the first (which is as Mr. *Basnage* represents it) *Sozomene's* conclusion would not hold ; from the latter (which is as *Sozomene* himself puts it) it certainly would. But to this it may be objected, " That, at the time *Sozomene* made this observation, the two different representations amounted but

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but to one and the same thing ; because all that the Reader could see, was a *work unfinished* ; and, for the rest, he had only the Historian's word." This, our Adversaries will allow to be fairly put. But they are not aware, that when *Sozomene* wrote, the face of things upon the place was such as was sufficient to convince his Readers that the *Jews* and *Gentiles* were forcibly driven from their work ; namely the marks of a desolating earthquake, and a consuming fire. *Chrysostome* tells us, these existed when he wrote ; and it would be absurd to think that such kind of marks could be obliterated so soon after.

THUS far in defence of the Historian's argument. I proceed to consider the false Fact, which *M. Basnage* has advanced, in support of his false representation of that Argument. He says, *that the Jews did not obtain their permission to rebuild the Temple, till the time Julian set out for his Persian expedition.* This he grounds on the words of *Socrates*, Κελεύει τάχῃ κτίζεσθαι τὸν Σολομῶν ναόν· καὶ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ Πέρσας ἤλαυνε ; which the Latin Translator renders, *Solomonis Templum protinus instaurari jubet. Ipse interim ad bellum contra Persas proficiscitur.* But
ἐπὶ

ἐπὶ Πέρσας ἤλαυνε does not signify he forthwith began his march, as if it had been ἐπὶ Πέρσας πορεύεσθαι; but that he began the war against them, by putting every thing in a hostile motion; which he might do before he left *Antioch*. And *Amm. Marcellinus*, who was, at that time, with *Julian*, and of his Court, tells us, that the Eruption, which put an end to the Project, happened while his Master was at *Antioch*.

BUT the Critic's *inference* from this will deserve a more particular consideration — so that there was little need of all these miracles to hinder the erection of a single building. Surely a sufficient cause for cutting short an enterprise of this nature may be found in the opposition of the Christians, who might take advantage of the Prince's absence in a remote region, of his death there, and the advancement of *Jovian*, who was an enemy to the Jews.

HERE are two things reprehensible in this inference, 1. A false state of the case; 2. and a groundless insinuation.

1. HE states it as if these miracles were work'd only to hinder the simple erection of a building for superstitious worship;

P the

the very error of *Ambrose*, taken notice of above. Whereas there was much more in the affair. It's erection would have given the lye to the Prophecies, and have contradicted the declared nature of the Gospel dispensation. In the first case, there seemed no sufficient reason to interpose; in the latter, an interposition was necessary.

2. THE *insinuation* is that the real obstruction came from the *Christians* in *Julian's* absence; — from his unexpected death; — and from the succession of a Christian to the Empire. This, we see, is only his opinion: I think differently; and had I only *my* conjectures to oppose to *his*, here we might leave it. But it would be betraying a good cause, not to remind the Reader, that M. *Basnage's* insinuation is utterly refuted by the concurrent testimony of two unexceptionable witnesses, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, and the Emperor *Julian* himself: From both of whom^e we learn, That the affair of the Temple-project was all over before *Julian* removed from *Antioch*.

^e See p. 44—45. and p. 56 & seq.

BUT there is still something^a behind the curtain : which either prudence or modesty made M. *Basnage* backward to subject to the abuse of every licentious Reader. But I am always for letting Truth be trusted with itself : therefore, to disguise nothing, I would observe, that one of the strongest objections to the Miracle seems here to be obscurely delineated. Whether he saw it in it's full force may be doubted. However, here it is, and the Reader shall have no reason to complain that it does not come with it's best foot forward. I will suppose then M. *Basnage* to make the following objection.

“ THAT admitting the re-edification of the Temple was both contrary to the *words* of the old Prophecies, and to the *nature* of the new Dispensation ; yet, as the Projector of this affront upon Religion was suddenly cut off, and succeeded by a Christian Emperor, before any considerable progress could be made, there was no need of a Miracle to defeat the attempt ; and God is not wont to make a needless waste of Them.”

THE Objection, we see, is specious, and, at first view, will be apt to impose upon us. But let us weigh it's real value.

THE case is agreed to be this, The two inveterate Enemies of the Christian name conspire together, tho' with different views, to blast its credit, and dishonour its pretensions: And this, in a point so essential, that the Religion itself must stand or fall with the issue of the event.

THEY put their design in execution. The materials are collected, the workmen assembled, the foundations laid, and the superstructure now advances without stop or impediment. In a word, every thing succeeds to their wishes. When, on a sudden, one of the most common accidents in the world blasts the whole project; a giddy headstrong Prince perishes in a rash adventure against a fierce and subtle enemy.

IN this case, what would the World have thought; the World, which never thinks favourably of Religious novelties, and which this bold defiance of the power of *Christ* had set at gaze, and made impatient for the event^f? Would it not have said, that *Christianity* was beholden to a mere accident; while the Power, that should have support-

^f See p. 72—73.

ed it, was not at hand to vindicate its credit and reputation ?

THE *Jews* had twice before attempted the restoration of their *temple-worship*: Once under *Hadrian*; and once again, under *Constantine*. At those junctures the attempt had none of this malice and formed impiety against the divinity of our holy Faith. It was simply a natural desire the *Jews* had of returning to their own land, and of re-establishing their country Rites. But still, it being contrary to God's religious oeconomy, the design was defeated by the *policy* of *Hadrian*, and the *zeal* of *Constantine*; and these *natural* impediments were sufficient to cover the honour of Religion. For, in those two cases, God's transaction was only with his Church. He promised to support it to the end of time, and he equally performs his promise whether that protection be conveyed by the Mortal instruments with which he works in the course of his general Providence, and whose blindness is guided by his all-seeing eye; or whether it be immediately afforded by the sudden arrest and new direction of Nature, irresistibly impelled by his all-powerful hand.

BUT the case is different in the affair in question. Here God had a controversy with his Enemies. His Power was defied, his Godhead challenged, and his Protection dared to interpose between Them and his Servants. At this important juncture, to let a natural event decide the quarrel, and to urge *that* as a proof of his victory, would be taking for granted the matter in question. For the affair was not with his Friends, who believed his superintendency; but with his Enemies, who laughed at and defied it. Not to shew himself, on this occasion, in all the terror of his Majesty, must have exposed his Religion to the same contempt as if the very pinnacles of the Temple had been completed.

BUT this is not all. A PROPHECY, such as this, concerning the utter destruction of the Temple, is of the nature of a PROHIBITORY LAW. For God's *foretelling* a thing *should never be*, contains in it a *prohibition* to do it: because that information is founded in *his own* Will, or Command; not in the Will or Command of *another*; therefore that *Will* binds all, to whose knowledge it arrives. This Law came to the knowledge of the Temple-projectors, as appears

pears from their very impiety in defying it^s. But it is of the nature and essence of *Law* to have penal functions. Without *them*, all Laws are vain ; especially *prohibitory Laws*. Now these Transgressors were as culpable in *beginning* the foundations, as they could have been had they lived to finish their work. Therefore to see them escape punishment, and safely and quietly go off when the change of times forbad them to proceed (a change, which had nothing in it more wonderful than the death of a rash Adventurer in battle) must have argued, that God was no more concerned in the issue of this than of all other natural events ; and consequently, that these *boasted Prophecies*, and this *pretended Gospel*, were the inventions of men. I believe modern Infidels would scarce have spared us, had they caught Church-history at this advantage.

Ἔ Πάντα ἢ τὰ ἄλλα δούτερά ἦν ἔ πονημύα, βασι-
λεῖ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις Ἑλλησι, ἔ πασιν Ἰουδαίοις· οἱ μὲν
γὰρ ἔτε Ἰουδαίοις σιωοῦντες, ἐκοινώνουα αὐτοῖς τῷ πονη-
μύα, ὑπολαβόντες, διώαθι κατορθῶν τὸ ἐχέρισμα, καὶ
ψεύδεις ἀπελέγξαι ἔ Χελσὶ τὰς προρρήσεις· οἱ ἢ, ἀμα
τῷ διανοῦντο, καὶ καιρὸν ἔχειν ὥντο ἀναστῆσαι τὸ ἱερόν—
τὴν δεσποικὴν ὑπολαμβάνων ὁ Μάταιος προρρήσιν
διελέγχευ. Theod. l. iii. c. 20. Sozom. l. v. c. 22.

BUT now, by a timely interposition, the honour of Religion was secured : And an exemplary punishment being inflicted ; the reverence of his Laws, the credit of his Messengers, and the Regal Dignity of his Son, were all amply vindicated.

AND now I am upon this subject, let me observe, what perhaps I might have found a better place for, That the forbearance of *Jovian* and *Valentinian* to revenge on those forward creatures in power, the insults and injuries offered on this occasion to many peaceable and honest men, is no slight proof of the reality of a miraculous interposition. For it shewed the Church fully satisfied that God had avenged his own cause.

THUS have we set this Objection in the best light we were able, both for the honour of Religion, and the credit of M. *Basnage's* criticism. The Reader sees to what it amounts.

HE concludes it in these words, — *Besides, the Historian [Sozomene] refers his Readers in a vague indefinite manner to the eye-witnesses of the Fact, without pointing out one single person by name.*

OB-

OBJECTORS are often too careless where their random reflections will light. This will fall upon the Apostle's narrative as well as the Historian's. *St. Paul*, arguing against some who denied the Resurrection from the dead, confutes them by the resurrection of *Jesus*; who was *seen*, after he was risen, *of above five hundred brethren at once*, of whom (says he, without specifying any one by name) *the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep*^s.

SOZOMENE writes a general history of the Church, for the use of the whole Christian world: and speaking, in its place, of the event at *Jerusalem*, he concludes his account in this manner, *If these things seem incredible to any one, Those who have had their information from eye-witnesses, and yet remain alive, will confirm it to him*^h. Of which number either he himself was one, or at least he had his account from one. In either case, this was proper satisfaction to a Doubter. And it had been impertinent to add, that "amongst these were *John*,

^s I Cor. xv. 6. ^h Ταῦτα ὅτω πιστὰ ἔκαστα φαί-
νεται, πιστεύουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ τῶν θεολογούντων ἀκηκοότες
ἐκ τοῦ βίου μαρτύρων. l. v. c. 22.

Thomas or *Andrew* of *Jerusalem*;” obscure names, which would have given his Reader no more satisfaction, than what his general information had conveyed before. But it may be said, that *St. Paul*, besides his *vague* account of *five hundred*, adds the names of *Cephas*, *James*, and *himself*. And so, doubtless would *Sozomene*, had he either seen it himself, or known any that had, with whose names his Reader was as well acquainted, as the *Corinthians* were with *Cephas*, *James*, and the *rest of the Twelve*. What he has done was what common sense dictated he should do. But *M. Basnage* seems to expect in a general History all the circumstance and precision of a *verbal process*.

HOWEVER, thus much we learn from these *vague* words of *Sozomene*, that he was not a mere copier; but, to verify his story, went as nigh the fountain head as he could get. And this being the practice of these three honest and judicious historians, we need not wonder that *One* should mention *this* incident, and *Another*, *that*, just as they received their information from the most credible of the *first ear-witnesses* they

they could find then alive : which too, by the way, is sufficient to take off all M. *Basnage* urges on the head of *variations*. But had we taken his *variations* from him, what were he then? A workman, without the proper tool of his trade ; for a *profess'd Objector* never borrowed more than one from the magazine of *Quintilian* — ARTIFICIS est invenire in actione adversarii quæ inter semetipsa pugnent, aut PUGNARE VIDEANTUR.

WE are now come to the end of this long Criticism, which concludes in these words : But lastly, *Cyril of Jerusalem, who was, at that time, Bishop of the place, and must have been upon the spot, since it was he, who, confiding in a prophecy of Daniel (which had foretold, as he thought, that the attempt would prove unsuccessful) encouraged and animated the people to repose their confidence in God. Notwithstanding, this same Cyril hath never taken the least notice of these many miracles : and yet it certainly was not, because he was no friend to miracles : We are told he wrote to Constantine the younger, to inform him, that he was more happy than his father, under whose empire the Cross of Christ had been*
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found here on earth ; since Heaven, to grace his reign, had displayed a more illustrious prodigy : which was a Cross much brighter than the Sun, seen in the firmament, for a long time together, by the whole city of Jerusalem. Why now was that Cross remembered, and all these miracles forgotten ? He assures the Jews they shall see the sign of the Cross ; and that it will precede the coming of the Son of God ; and yet he says not one word of those which had been miraculously affixed on their habits. The silence of a Bishop, who was upon the place, who loved miracles, and laboured for the conversion of the Jews, looks very suspicious ; while, at the same time, those who do speak to it, lived at a distance.

THIS supposed fact, concerning Cyril's testimony, (as here stated) is indeed a strong objection to the Miracle. What shall we say then ? Would not any one conclude that this learned man, a real friend to Revelation, and a faithful Historian, had weighed it well before he ventured to pronounce upon its consequences, in so public a manner ? Who would suspect that He has taken *one* thing for granted, which every body knows to be false ; and *another*,

other, which no body can know, to be true.

HE takes it for granted, that the works which now remain of *Cyril*, were written *after* the event; whereas they were all written *before*. These are the *Catecheses ad competentes*, the *Catecheses mystagogicæ*, and the *Epistle to Constantius*: the two first bear date about 347, and the latter in 351; Those, sixteen; This, twelve years *before* the miracle in question. And the worst is, the learned Critic could not be ignorant of it.

IF he had no intention to deceive by this captious insinuation, we must lay the blame on his careless expression; and that his argument from *Cyril's* silence, when set in the best light, stands thus:

“THE pretended miracle at *Jerusalem* happened in the year 363. *Cyril* lived to the year 386: so that we cannot but conclude, he wrote and preached much within that period. He appears to be fond of recording miracles: but he had peculiar reasons to celebrate, and expatiate upon, *this*. It favoured his charitable zeal for the conversion of the *Jews*; but, above all, the
glory

glory of it reflected much lustre upon himself, as he had predicted the defeat. Had he therefore known it to be true, he must have recorded it. But the silence of Antiquity concerning his testimony shews he did not record it. For to whom but to *Cyril*, the Bishop of the place, and then upon the spot, should the ancient relators of the fact have appealed? Yet he was not forgotten in the croud; for they tell us of his faith in the *prophecy of Daniel*. We must, therefore, conclude, that the event, whatever it was, had struck the good Bishop dumb; and that his silence proceeded from that sort of confusion, which we now-a-days see in the *modest* part of our *Revelation-Prophets*, when some unexpected event between the *Turk* and the *Emperor* has disconcerted the scheme they had chalked out for the direction of Divine Providence."

It will hardly be said, I have not done the argument justice. Let us see then what can be replied to it.

1. WHETHER *Cyril* left any thing behind him (except what he wrote before the event) is not any where said. Some perhaps may conclude from *Jerom*, that he wrote

wrote nothing after this time: For, in his catalogue of Ecclesiastical writers, the works mentioned above are given as a complete list of what *Cyril* wrote: and it is scarce to be supposed that any of his writings should have perished between his time and that of *Jerom*.

2. *CYRIL* might write many things, and yet none relative to this affair; or in which he could properly introduce it.

3. HE might have given the history of it in all its circumstances, and yet these three Historians (to whom *M. Basnage's* observation is confined) not be guilty of any neglect in not mentioning his testimony *by name*. Or if it were a neglect, it was the same they committed in passing over two other contemporary writers, *Gregory Nazianzene* and *John Chrysostome*; one of whom has spoken *fully*, and the other *frequently*, to the miracle in question. But to this, perhaps, it may be replied, "That tho' they have not quoted them, yet they have *referred to them*, and *borrowed from them*." How does the Objector know that? — From the *Homilies* of the One, and the *Invectives* of the Other, now remaining. — Very well: and
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for aught he knows to the contrary, had any of *Cyril's* supposed works been remaining, we should have seen Them *quoting from*, and *referring to* Him ; especially, as They relate several circumstances, mentioned neither by *Gregory* nor *Chrysostom*. Had *Gregory's* works been lost, we had been as unable to know that they borrowed from *Him*, as we now are that they borrowed from *Cyril*.

4. As to Their recording the good Bishop's prophetic *confidence* in the divine interposition, and at the same time overlooking his Testimony to the miracle that followed, a very good reason may be given ; and such a one as does honour to their judgment. *Cyril* was *singular* in the first case ; and but *one of many* in the other. They took, therefore, from him what no other could supply : and what was to be found every where (the testimony to the miracle) they left in common to the church.

5. As to the objection, from the circumstance of *Cyril's loving miracles*, let me observe, That if it could be proved, from a work of his written after 363, that he had neglected any fair occasion to record the defeat

feat of *Julian*, The objection would have some weight. But in the total uncertainty whether he did record the story or no, it turns against the Objector, as the circumstance of *Cyril's loving miracles* adds probability to the affirmative, That, if he did write at all, he would find room for a subject he loved to write upon.

6. BUT since the learned Critic hath been pleased to speak slightly of this excellent Prelate, as if he were both fanatical in interpreting Prophecies, and bigotted in believing Miracles; so much will be due to the virtues of a worthy man, (how far soever removed from us in time and place,) as to vindicate him from unfair aspersions: especially when this justice to his character will be seen to reflect credit on the share he took in opposing *Julian's* attempt. There is a story recorded of him, for which every good man will reverence his memory. He had an Ecclesiastical squabble with Aca-
cius Bishop of Cæsarea, about Metropoli-
tical Jurisdiction. Cyril despised so fri-
volous a contest; and refused to appear be-
fore the Palestine Synod, to which his fa-
ctious Adversary had delated him. Where-

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on, the Synod agreed to depose him, for contempt. But to give their Sentence a shew of credit against so distinguished a personage, they added this crime to the other, That once, in a desolating famine, he disposed of the treasures of his Church to feed the Poor. This action, so becoming a faithful Minister of Jesus Christ, fully shews, that, whether he had a right to metropolitcal Jurisdiction or no, he well deserved it. But the crying part of this sacrilege is yet behind : It seems, that in the sale of his sacred Wardrobe, a reverend Stole, interwoven with gold, and made yet more illustrious by the sanctity of its Giver, *Constantine the Great*, came at length, in the ceaseless round of property, into the possession of a notorious Prostitute, who flourished with it on the public stage.

M. *Basnage* concludes his remark on *Cyril* in this manner : *The silence of a Bishop, who was upon the place, looks very suspicious; while, at the same time, those who do speak to it lived at a distance.* Admitting the Bishop was indeed silent, how could this learned man, who forms his charge on the information of the three Historians, say, that
those,

those, who speak to the miracle, lived at a distance ; when *Sozomene* plainly tells us, that, at the time he wrote, there were several still living, who had it from the eye-witnesses of the Fact ? Here then, for the silence of *one* man, we have the testimony of *many*. — But *Sozomene* speaks of none by *name*. — Who knows, then, but the Bishop might be amongst the *nameless* ? It hath been many a Bishop's fate. However, *the testimony of the people on the Place* is directly asserted by the Historian ; and the *silence of Cyril* only inferred by the Critic, from his not finding him amongst the Witnesses.

AND, with these reflections on the poor Prelate, so unworthy the learning, the sense, and the ingenuity of M. *Basnage*, he concludes his OBJECTIONS *against the Miracle*.

WHAT follows is to shew his impartiality. “ However (says he) it ought
 “ not to be dissembled, that if one of the
 “ Jewish Chronologists maintains, that the
 “ sudden and unexpected death of *Julian*
 “ prevented the rebuilding the Temple ;
 “ another of them assures us, it was re-
 “ built ; and that when this was done at

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“ a vast expence, it tumbled down again ;
 “ and, the next day, a dreadful fire from
 “ Heaven melted all the iron instruments
 “ which remained, and destroyed an in-
 “ numerable multitude of the Jews. This
 “ confession of the Rabbins is the more
 “ considerable, as it reflects dishonour on
 “ the Nation ; and these Gentry are not
 “ wont to copy from the writings of the
 “ Christians.”

HERE, it must be owned, he hath approved himself *indifferent* : and if his Arguments *against* the miracle be more in *number*, than those *for* it ; the *weight*, at least, on both sides is equal.

NOT that I would insinuate, as if this Rabbinical testimony was altogether impertinent. I have myself produced it in support of the Evidenceⁱ : and, principally for the sake of that circumstance, which M. *Baskage* so ingenuously acknowledges, — *That the Rabbins are not wont to copy from Christian Writers.*

NOR will I deny, that this Testimony hath its *proper place* in a religious *History of*

ⁱ P. 69, 70.

the Jews. What I cannot reconcile to this great man's general character, nor even to that air of impartiality which he here professes to preserve, is, that when he hath brought out all he could invent to the discredit of the Miracle, he should content himself with producing only one single circumstance, and that, the least considerable, in its favour. Infomuch that if ever the conclusive testimonies of *Ammianus Marcellinus*, *Gregory Nazianzene*, and *John Chrysostome* should be lost, and this piece of Criticism remain, the silence of so candid and knowing a writer as M. *Basnage* will be infinitely a better proof that no such Evidence had ever been, than what he himself urges, from the silence of Antiquity, against the testimony of *Cyril*.

BUT, to end with this learned Critic. There is, I must confess, something so very odd in his conduct on this occasion, as cannot but give offence to every sober Reader. Yet I would by no means be thought to approve of Mr. *Lowth's* uncharitable reflections; which stand (as they *often* do amongst worse writers) in the place of a confutation. One may allow M. *Basnage* to have thought

perversely ; because this is an infirmity common to Believers and Unbelievers: But one would never suspect a *Minister of the Gospel* of a formed design to undermine a Religion into whose service he had solemnly entered ; nor, a *man, truly learned*, of a bias to Infidelity: such dispositions imply gross *knavery* and *ignorance* ; and M. *Basnage* approved himself, on all other occasions, a man of uncommon talents and integrity.

A STRONG prejudice against the Character of the *Fathers* was what, apparently, betrayed him into this unwarrantable conclusion : for, injuriously suspecting them of imposture whenever they speak of Miracles, he began with them where he should have ended ; and read their accounts, not to examine facts yet in question, but to condemn frauds as if already detected. Hence every *variation*, nay, every *variety* in their relations, appeared to him a *contradiction*. And that which indeed supports their joint testimony was by this learned man imagined to be the very thing that overthrew it. But their best Vindication is a strict scrutiny into their
Evidence

Evidence. This we have attempted ; not as an Advocate for the *Fathers*, but an Inquirer after *Truth*. What hath been the result must be left to the judgment of the Public.

WE go on with the remaining Objections to this miracle, in which we shall be more brief.

V. IN the next place it is pretended, “ That this fiery eruption was an ARTIFICIAL contrivance of the Christians to keep their Enemies at a distance.” It is said, the *Egyptians*, from the earliest times, had the secret of mixing combustible materials in such a manner as to produce the effects of exploded Gunpowder: That Sir *William Temple*, Lord *Herbert of Cherbury*, and, an abler man than either of them, Sir *Thomas Browne* of *Norwich*, have dropt hints as if some of the greatest wonders, recorded both in sacred and prophane Antiquity, were the effects of this destructive Composition; such as the thunders and lightening at the giving the Law from Mount *Sinai*; the deaths of *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* in their contest with *Aaron*; and the defeat of *Brennus* and his army of

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Gauls when they assaulted the Temple of *Apollo* at *Delphi*. This too, they say, will account for a strong mark of resemblance between the latter and the defeat of *Julian*, in both which the impending destruction was predicted; In the one by *Cyril*, in the other by the Priests of *Apollo*^k."

THE Objection, we see, supposes as well free *power* and *opportunity*, as profound address in these Christian Engineers: for let them be as knowing as you will in all the hidden arts of *Egypt*, yet, if they had not elbow-room for their work, all their skill would signify nothing.

WE will examine how they were beest-ed in each of these particulars. At this important juncture the Christians were unarmed, and defenceless. They were rendered, by law, incapable of bearing Office; and were actually deprived all exercise of it. And they submitted every where, without resistance, to the imperial Decrees. But this, to rebuild the Temple, was supported with all the power and authority of

^k — In hoc partium certamine repente Antistites advenisse Deum clamant, &c. Just. l. xxiv. c. 8.

the Empire. And the project was no sooner on foot, than the Place was possessed and crouded with vast numbers of their enemies, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*. Nor was this all. The Christians were driven from the neighbourhood of the holy place, by their just fears and apprehensions. They had every thing to expect from this impious combination. Their Enemies came in crowds to share and enjoy the approaching Triumph; while each strove which should exceed the other in violence and outrage. Infomuch that *some* (as *Chrysostome* assures us) *absconded, and shut themselves up in their houses; others fled into deserts and solitudes, and avoided all places of public resort*¹. So that whatever the Priests of *Apollo* at *Delphi* might find themselves capable of performing, who had their Town and Temple in possession, and a good garrison to keep off the enemy, till they were ready for their reception; it is plain the poor Christian Pastors (their Flocks dispersed, and themselves absconding) were utterly

¹ οἱ μὲν ἐν ταῖς οἰκαῖς ἐκεῖντο, οἱ δὲ πρὸς τὰς ἐρημίας μετὰκίζοντο, καὶ τὰς ἀγορὰς ἔφευγον.
Adv. Jud. Orat. v.

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deprived of all other arms but those of Faith and Prayer. This, I think, may stand for an answer to that resemblance between the predictions of *Cybil*, and the Priests of *Apollo*, from which the objection deduceth such consequences of suspicion.

BUT, let us allow them, both will and opportunity to do the Feat: yet still, I apprehend, every likely *means* would be wanting. Chemical writers, indeed, in their ridiculous claims to Antiquity, have boasted much of the profound knowledge of the old *Egyptians* in the Spagyric Art: but this without the least proof, or warrant from Antiquity. The first authentic Account we have of *artificial fire* was an invention or discovery of the seventh Century. One *Callinicus*, an *Egyptian* of *Heliopolis*, fled from the *Sarazens* (who then possessed that Country) to *Constantinople*^m;

^m See Nicetas, Theophanes, Cedrenus, Constantinus Porphyrogenitus. The latter tells us, in one place, that the Greeks had this composition from *Callinicus*; and in another, that *Constantine the Great* received it, by way of revelation, from an Angel. The monk who forged this fable appears not to have had so clean an invention as our Milton, who makes the Devil the Author of these destructive fires.

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and taught the Greeks a military Fire called by them ὑγρὸν πῦρ [a liquid fire] but by the Franks, *Feu gregiois*. It was composed, they tell us, of naphtha and bitumen, and was blown out of iron and brass Tubes, or shot from a kind of Cross-bow. Wherever it fell, it stuck and burnt obstinately, and was with great difficulty extinguished. Some, indeed, say it was accompanied with a sound like Thunder. But this is certain, the execution was by a fierce and continued burning. After this we hear of no other artificial fires till the thirteenth Century ; when our famous countryman, *Roger Bacon*, invented that composition we call *Gunpowder*. He specifies the very ingredients ; and speaks of it as a discovery of his own. It was not long before it was put in practice : For, in the next Century, Froissart the Historian mentions the use of *Cannon*, but as of a perfectly new invention.

It is true, that when the Missionaries had opened themselves a way into *China*, and were enabled to give us a more perfect account of that great Empire than we had received from the straggling Adventurers,
who

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who at several times had penetrated thither before them, we are told, amongst the other wonders of these remote Regions, of Fire-arms, both great and small ; which had been in use for sixteen hundred years : nay, these Missionaries go so far as to say that they themselves had seen Cannon which had been cast six or eight Centuries before. But there are other, and more early accounts which shew these to be entirely fabulous. M. *Renaudot* hath given the public a translation of two Mahometan Voyagers, who visited the south part of *China*, in the ninth Century. These *Arabians* are curious in describing every thing rare and uncommon, or in the least differing from their own customs and manners. And yet they give us no hint of meeting with this prodigious Machine ; and such must Cannon needs be deemed by men unacquainted with the use of gunpowder. Four Centuries afterwards, *Marco Polo* the *Venetian*, a curious and intelligent Traveller, penetrated into *China* by the north : and he too is silent on this head. In the next Century our famous countryman *Mandevill* rambled thither. His genius was towards natural knowledge, having studied and professed

fessed Medicine ; he was skilled likewise in most of the Languages of the East and West. This man sojourned a considerable time in *China*. He served in their Armies, and commanded in their strong Places : yet he takes not the least notice of Cannon, which he must have used, had there been any, and the use of a perfect novelty he would hardly have omitted to describe. For he set out on his travels in the year 1332 ; and *Larrey* says that the first piece of Cannon that had been seen in *France*, was in 1346. Though *Du Cange* observes, that the Registers of the Chamber of accounts at Paris make mention of Gunpowder so early as the year 1338.

ALL this, when laid together, seems to furnish out a very strong proof that the *Chinese* had never seen Cannon till after this visit of Sir *John Mandevil* : which agrees well with a known fact, That, about two Centuries ago, the *Chinese*, in their wars with the *Tartars*, were forced to take in the assistance of the *Europeans* to manage their Artillery.

BUT this fable of the antient use of Cannon in *China* is not to be charged on the
Missionaries,

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Missionaries, but on the *Chinese* themselves, the proudest and vainest People upon earth; arrogating to themselves the invention and improvement of every kind of Art and Science. They boasted, in the same manner, of the antiquity and perfection of their Astronomy and Mathematics. But here their performances soon betrayed the folly and impudence of their pretences. It was not so easy to detect them in the subject in question. The Missionaries, on their arrival, saw Cannon, which doubtless had lain there for two or three ages. And of these, the *Chinese* were at liberty to fable what they pleased. But, it appears plain enough, they were indebted for them to their commerce with the *Mahometans*, some time between the voyage of *Mandevil* and the arrival of the Missionaries: very likely soon after their invention in *Europe*; for *Peter Mexia* speaks of the *Moors* as having the use of Cannon about the year 1343. A probability very much supported by the candid confession of the *Chinese* themselves (in a modester humour) that though they had Cannon from the most early times of their Empire, yet, till the *Tartar* war, spoken of above, they were totally unacquainted

acquainted with the management of Artillery.

LET this suffice, in answer to an Objection, or Suspicion rather, and that the wildest that ever Infidelity advanced to elude the force of sober evidence. An Objection not only unsupported by Antiquity, but discredited by itself. Inventions which promote the health and happiness of our species, have been often indeed kept concealed; and when at last communicated, soon lost again, and forgotten. But the natural malignity of our nature would never suffer so destructive and pernicious an invention to remain long a secret; or, when it was once known, ever to be diffused or remitted. So that if this kind of artificial fire was an early discovery of the *Egyptian* Sages, it had a fortune which can never be accounted for on the common principles of human conduct.

VI. THE last Objection, which is a little more plausible, is to be received with a great deal more ceremony and distinction; as coming from the great Intimados of Nature, the Secretaries and Confidants of her intrigues.

intrigues. These Men tell us, " That the fire, which burst from the foundations of the *Temple*, was a mere NATURAL eruption. The regions in and about the *Lesser Asia* were (they say) in all ages subject to Earthquakes, caused by subterraneous fires : and the Land of *Judæa* in particular had its entrails full of these destructive principles, as appears from the present face of the Country about *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*. That this Eruption from the mountain of the *Temple*, had all the marks of a *natural* event, as appears from its being attended with the same circumstances which have accompanied all such ; and particularly the Earthquake and Eruption at *Nicomedia*. Nor is the *time*, in which it happened, sufficient to oppose to this conclusion. For these *commotions of nature* being frequent in every age, it is no wonder they should sometimes fall in with those *moral disorders*, occasioned by religious squabbles, which are as frequent ; nor that, at such a juncture, frightened Superstition should catch at these accidents of terror to support a labouring cause. Hence it was (say they

they) that *Jupiter Ammon* was made to destroy the Army of *Cambyfes*, when sent to burn his Temple, and lay waste the Country of his Worshippers; and *Apollo*, to fall upon the Army of *Brennus*, when he led it to plunder the Temple at *Delphi*."

THIS is the Objection : and I have not scrupled to help the Objectors to set it off. For besides the distinction due to their character, I had other reasons why I would willingly have it seen in its best light.

SEVERAL of the circumstances attending the Event in question, and *some*, which have been generally held the most *miraculous*, I have myself delivered as the effects of *natural* causes ; induced thereto by the love of Truth, and a fond desire of reconciling the Fact itself, and the Christian *Fathers*, who relate it, to the *Free-thinker's* more favourable opinion. It will be fit, therefore, I should explain and justify my own conduct before I object to that of my Adversaries.

THE Agency of a superior Being, on any portion of the visible Creation lying within

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the reach of our senses (whereby it acquires properties and directions different from what we hold it capable of receiving from the established Laws of matter and motion) we call a *Miracle*.

To ask, whether God's *immediate Agency* makes a necessary part of the definition; or whether, to give a *Miracle* its name, it be sufficient that another Being, superior to Man, performed the operation, appears to me a very impertinent enquiry. Because there are but two sorts of Men who concern themselves about the matter; Those who hold God's *moral government*; and Those who allow only his *natural*.

THE first sort, the *Religionists*, must, on their proper principles, allow, that a work performed by superior agency, in confirmation of a Doctrine worthy of God, and remaining uncontrouled by a greater, can be no other than the attestation of Heaven, to which God hath set his hand and seal. Because the permitting an *evil Being* to perform these wonders, would be deceiving his Creatures, who know little or nothing of the World of Spirits. It would be drawing them unavoidably into error,
where

where they would be fixed ; which is contrary to what the Religionist conceives of God's moral attributes, and, consequently, of his Government. As to the Sectators of *Naturalism*, the specific qualities of a Miracle never come within the range of their enquiries ; for, holding only the *natural* government of God, they deny, of course, the very existence of every thing that implies his *moral* Regimen.

MIRACLES, then, are of two sorts. Those where the Laws of Nature are *suspended* or *reversed* (such as the *budding of Aaron's rod*, and the *raising of Lazarus from the dead*.) And Those which only *give a new direction* to its Laws (such as *bringing water from the rock*, and *stopping the issue of blood*.) For Miracles being an useful, not an ostentatious display of God's power, we cannot but conclude, He would employ the one or other sort indifferently, as each best served the purpose of his interposition.

Now, as it would be *impious* to bring in natural causes to explain the *first* sort ; so, totally to exclude those causes in the latter, would be *superstitious* ; and both, in-

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finitely *absurd*. Who, for instance, would venture to affirm that the prolific virtue in the stock of *Aaron's rod* contributed to the blossoming of its branch? Or, on the other hand, that the water which came from the *Rock* at the command of *Moses*, was just then created to do honour to his Ministry? In this case, what more would a rational Believer conclude, than that *God*, by making, at that instant, a fissure in the *Rock*, gave room for the water to burst out, which had before been lodged there by *nature*, as in its proper Reservoir? And the sober Critic, who proceeds in this manner, only follows that method in *interpreting*, which God himself useth in *working* the Miracle; which is, to give to Nature all that Nature could easily perform. We are further encouraged in thus explaining the exercise of Divine power, by the account the Holy Spirit giveth us of one of the most awful exertions of it, recorded in holy Writ. But before I proceed to the relation itself, the Reader should be reminded of what hath been observed of the *order* of the appearances in the *natural* eruption at *Nicomedia*, and in that we call *miraculous*, at *Jerusalem*; where, in both cases,

cases, the desolation began with *winds* and tempest; was continued by an *earthquake*; and concluded in a *fiery* eruption. The story is this, The Prophet *Elijah*, oppressed with the corruptions of the House of *Israel*, is commanded to wait God's Presence, and attend his Word. "And he said, Go forth, " and stand upon the Mount before the " Lord. And behold the Lord passed by, " and a great and strong WIND rent the " Mountains, and brake in pieces the " Rocks before the Lord; but the Lord " was not in the wind; and after the wind " an EARTHQUAKE; but the Lord was " not in the earthquake: And after the " earthquake a FIRE; but the Lord was " not in the fire: And after the fire a " SMALL STILL VOICE ⁿ." His coming to shake terribly the earth is here described, we see, in all the pomp of incensed Majesty. Yet it is remarkable, that the Precursors of his Presence follow each other in the order of physical progression, in which Nature ranged the several Phænomena at *Nicomedia* and *Jerusalem*; the *Tempests*, the *Earthquake*, and the *Fire*: an Order, the sacred Historian plainly points out to us,

ⁿ 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

where he says, that *God was not in any of these*, intimating that they were pure physical appearances, the parade of Nature, thus far suffered to do its office without interruption ; but that *He was in the small still voice*, which closed this dreadful Procession, intimating that these natural appearances were *ministerial* to the *interposition* of the Author and Lord of Nature.

LET us apply all this to our Argument ; and consider, how a sober Believer, convinced by the force of evidence, would interpret the *Miracle* in question. He would, without doubt, conclude, that the mineral and metallic substances, which, by their accidental fermentation, are wont to take fire and burst out in flames, were the native Contents of the place from which they issued ; But that, in all likelihood, they would have there slept, and still continued in the quiet innoxious state in which they had so long remained, had not the *breath of the Lord awoke and kindled them*.

BUT when the Divine Power had thus miraculously interposed to *stir up* the rage of these fiery Elements, and yet to *restrain* their fury to the objects of his Vengeance,
he

he then again suffered them to do their ordinary office : because *Nature* thus directed would, by the exertion of its own Laws, answer all the ends of the *moral designation*.

THE consequence of which will be, that its effects, whether *destructive* or only *terrific*, would be the same with those attending mere natural eruptions.

So far, indeed, one cannot but suspect, that the specific qualities in the fermented elements, which occasioned the *frightful appearances*, though they were natural to enflamed matter under certain circumstances, were yet, by the peculiar pleasure of Providence, *given* on this occasion ; and not merely left to the conjunction of mechanic causes, or the fortuitous concurrence of matter and motion, to *produce*. And my reason is, because these *frightful appearances*, namely the *Cross in the Heavens, and on the Garments*, were admirably fitted, as moral emblems, to proclaim the triumph of *Christ* over *Julian*. For the Apostate having, in a public and contemptuous manner, taken the *Monogramme* and *Cross* out of the military Ensigns °, which *Constan-*

° Sozom. l. v. c. 17.

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tine had put there, in memory of the aerial vision that presaged his victories ; the same kind of triumphant Cross was again erected in the Heavens, to confound the vanity of that impotent bravade : and having forbidden the followers of *Jesus*, by public edict, to use the very *name* of Christians ; a *stigmatic Cross* was now imposed upon the Garments of those who were seconding his impieties, or were witnesses to the defeat of his attempt.

AND, in these shining marks of vengeance there was nothing low, fantastical, or superstitious. The impress was great and solemn, and reached up to the dignity of the occasion.

ANOTHER *Use* of these *terrific appearances* (kept hid indeed for ages in the womb of time, but now beginning to manifest the profound views of the divine Disposer of all things) will farther confirm our opinion of their *final cause*. The *use*, I mean, is this, That the finding so extraordinary a Fact as the *Cross upon the Garments* so confidently and unanimously related by the contemporary writers, becomes

comes one of the strongest confirmations of its reality. For the *Fathers* not having the least conception of its being a *natural* phænomenon, but esteeming it in all respects *miraculous*, they must have been well assured of the notoriety of the Fact before they would have ventured to attach so incredulous a circumstance to the rest ; and to dwell and insist upon it more than on all the rest.

THUS much concerning these *two sorts of Miracles*, and the different manner of handling them. But it is to be remarked, There is yet a *third*, compounded of the other *two*, where the Laws of Nature are in part *arrested and suspended* ; and in part only *differently directed*. Of this kind was the punishment of the old world by a *Deluge* of Waters. Now, if, to such as these, we should apply the way of interpretation proper to the *second* sort, where only a new direction is given to the Laws of Nature ; the absurdities, arising from this abusive application, would soon disgrace the method itself : as That Divine may have sufficiently experienced, who ingeniously contrived to bring on the Deluge of waters

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by the help of an approaching *Comet*, but was never after, by any physical address, able to draw it off again. And such disgraces are hardly to be avoided: for, in the *second* and simpler kind, the physical interpretation hath *Experience* to support it: whereas in the *third* and more complicated, the Artist must be content with an *Hypothesis*.

THUS much was proper to be said before we came to try the force of the Objection.

1. IT begins with observing, "That the regions in and about the *Lesser Asia* were, in all ages, subject to Earthquakes, caused by subterraneous fires; and that *Judæa* in particular had its entrails full of these destructive principles; as appears even from the present face of the country about *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*."

IF this account be true, as I believe it is, then *Judæa* was a proper scene, (as occasion required) for this specific display of the divine vengeance. And we see why *fire* was the scourge employed: As we may be sure *water* would have been, were the region of
Judæa

Judæa naturally subject to Inundations. For Miracles not being an ostentatious but a necessary Instrument of God's moral Government, we cannot conceive it probable that he would *create* the elements for this purpose, but *use* those which already lay stored up against the *day of visitation*. By this means, his *wisdom* would appear as conspicuous as his *power*, when it should be seen, that the Provisions lain in at the formation of the World for the use and solace of his helpless Creatures while continuing in obedience, could, at his word, be turned into scourges when they became faithless and rebellious. The force of this reasoning is so obvious, that, had divine Providence been pleased to use the contrary method, Unbelievers, I am persuaded, would have made that very method an objection to the credibility of the Fact. However, though it seemeth most agreeable to what we conceive of divine Wisdom, that it should often use the instrumentality of Nature in its miraculous interpositions, yet let it be observed that the same Wisdom always provides against the *Author of Nature* his being lost or obscured under the glare and noise of his *Instruments*.

If

IT is said the Region of *Judæa* was, from the quality of its Contents, much subject to Earthquakes and fiery eruptions. If so, How happened it, that, from the most early times to the period in question, there never was any unusual disorder in its entrails (if you except an earthquake which *Josephus* mentions as happening in the time of *Herod*) but at the overthrow of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*; at the destruction of *Korah* and his company; at the *Crucifixion*; and on this attempt of *Julian*? How happened it, that this destructive Element lay quiet in the midst of so much fuel, and for so many Ages, and only then, and at those critical junctures shewed itself, when God would manifest his wrath and displeasure at incorrigible Sinners? Can any reasonable account be given of such a Disposition but this, That when God decrees to punish, it is his purpose, the divine Agency should be made fully manifest. To pretend, they were all natural events, and the several coincidences merely casual, is supposing something vastly more incredible than what Unbelievers would persuade us is implied in *miracles*.

2. BUT

2. BUT it is said, " This eruption from the foundations of the Temple had all the *marks* of a natural event, being attended with the same circumstances which *Am. Marcellinus* relates to have accompanied the Earthquake at *Nicomedia*."

IT is very certain, the eruption from the foundations of the Temple had all these *marks* ; and if our account of the Miracle (as it seems the most rational) be indeed the *true*, it could not but have them. When God had kindled the fiery matter in this storehouse of his wrath, all the effects which succeeded the disruption must needs be the same with those which attend the explosion of any other subterraneous fire. What would follow had they not been the same ? Certain discredit on the whole story ; which in Times so squeamish and so difficult of admittance as the present, would have passed for a Fairy-tale. This consideration induced me to shew at large the exact conformity, throughout the process of the event, between the visitation at *Jerusalem* and the disaster at *Nicomedia*. — It is the least of an Unbeliever's care to reconcile his objections to one another. I knew His first cavil to
the

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the credit of the Fact would be the *wonderful* attending the eruption. I therefore provided against it by shewing this fact to be similar in its main circumstances to the best attested relations of natural events. But I knew too, in case of a defeat, He would not be ashamed to point his cavil the other way, and turn this very *resemblance* against a supernatural interposition.---What pity is it that *Ammianus*, who best knew the full extent of this resemblance, was not more quick-sighted. He too was an enemy of the Christian name (indeed, to do him justice, more fair and candid than any I know of the same denomination amongst ourselves) but so little sensible of its force, and so much confounded with the event, That, instead of telling the affair at large, which fell in so exactly with his detailed account of the disaster at *Nicomedia*, He hurries it over with the rapidity of one of the blasted Workmen, who had just escaped the common desolation.

AFTER all, a general *resemblance* in the *effects* is granted. What we insist on is the *difference* in their *cause* or original. And this difference is supported even by the
very

very nature of things from whence arose that general resemblance.

Nicomedia, a City of *Bitbynia*, was placed on an eminence, at the bottom of a Gulph of that name, in the *Propontis*. Now Mountains thus situated, into whose cavernous entrails the Sea may find its way, must, if other natural causes favour, be, more than ordinary, subject to fiery eruptions; of which we need no other example than the Mountain *Vesuvius*. But the Temple-hill at *Jerusalem* was neither large nor cavernous; nor was it in the neighbourhood of the Sea; circumstances which, all the world over, concur to produce this effect. Neither were any *new openings* made, at this time, into the bowels of the mountain; which, by letting in *air* or *water*, might be supposed to ferment and inflame their combustible contents. The Historians who relate this *attempt* inform us, that even some parts of the old foundations were left standing to erect the new edifice upon; and in others, where the old works were judged too infirm, or little better than a heap of rubbish, that incumbrance only was removed. This appears from the relations of *Socrates*
and

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and *Sozomene* compared with one another. *Socrates* assures us, that the earthquake threw out stones from the old foundations : which he mentions to shew the *literal* accomplishment of the prophecy of *Jesus*, foretelling, that there *should not be left one stone upon another*. *Sozomene* indeed affirms, that the foundations were cleared ; but then he goes on and says, the earthquake threw out stones. Now as no new foundations were ever laid, he must mean, with *Socrates*, the stones of the old. And thus the seeming difference in their accounts will be reconciled. Let me add, that more than once before, and at distant times, they had dug deep into this Hill, to lay the foundations of *Solomon's* and *Herod's* Temples : and then every thing continued quiet. Yet, now, when no new openings were made, the effort to build a *third* was followed by a fiery eruption.

AGAIN, In natural ferments of this kind, the commotion is generally very *extensive*, and runs through large tracts of Country. Thus the Earthquake mentioned by *Josephus*, shook the whole land of *Judæa* ; and

^p L. iii. c. 20.

^q L. v. c. 22.

the

the disaster at *Nicomedia*, as *Marcellinus* informs us, was occasioned by a tremor which went over *Macedonia*, *Asia*, and *Pontus*; and did infinite mischief throughout its course^r. On the contrary, the Eruption at *Jerusalem* was confined to the very spot on which the Temple had stood; and continued only to deny access to such who, not taking warning by those whom it had destroyed, would still persevere in their impiety^s: A circumstance very different from common Earthquakes and fiery Eruptions; and of which we have no examples, save in the Eruption that destroyed *Korah* and his company; and in the Earthquake at the Crucifixion of our Lord; Both of them miraculous events.

THIRDLY, in natural eruptions the fire continues burning till the fuel which supplies it be consumed. But the Witnesses to *this* assign a very different period to its

^r *Iisdem diebus terræmotus horrendi per Macedoniam, Asiamque & Pontum assiduis pulsibus oppida multa concusserunt & montes. Inter monumenta tamen multiformium ærurnarum eminuere Nicomediæ clades, &c. Marcel. l. xvii. c. 7.*

^s — fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus inaccessible. *L. xxiii. c. i.*

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fury. It continued just as long as the Builders persisted in their attempt, and no longer. At every new effort to proceed, the rising fire drove them back; but at the instant they gave out, it totally subsided. This so terrified *Julian*, that *Chrysostome* tells us^t, he relinquished the enterprize for fear the fire should turn upon his own head. And this made *Marcellinus* say, — “*emento DESTINATIVUS repellente*” — an expression of great elegance to imply the direction of superior agency.

3. In the last place we are told “That even so critical a juncture is not to be accounted of: for that *religious squabbles* and *natural prodigies* are equally common; and Church Artists never wanting to fit them to one another. Hence, they say, are derived those two notable Judgments of *Jupiter Ammon* and *Apollo*, upon the Armies of *Cambyfes* and *Brennus*.”

^t ταῦτα ἀκέσας ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἰουλιανὸς καὶ τοὶ ποσά-
τῳ μανίαν περὶ τὸ πρὸς τὸ ἐκείνῳ, δεῖσας μὴ περὶ τὸ
ρω προελθὼν ὑπὲρ τὸ ἐαυτοῦ κεφαλῇ καλέσῃ τὸ πῦρ,
ἀπέστη ἡτληθεὶς μὴ τῷ ἔθνει παντός. Adver. Judæos,
Orat. v.

THE

THE Observation is plausible. It pleases the Imagination: and wants nothing but Truth to reconcile it to the Judgment.

IN Miracles performed by the *ministry* of God's Messengers where the Laws of Nature are *suspended or reversed*, it is sufficient that the Instrument which wrought them declares their purpose and Intention. But, in a Miracle performed by the *immediate power* of God, without the intervention of his servants, in which only a *new direction* is given to the Laws of Nature, one of these two conditions is required to secure its credit; either that an inspired Servant of God predicted it, and declared its purpose beforehand, as *Samuel* did the *storm of thunder and rain*, the declaration of God's displeasure, for the people's demand of a King: or that it was seen to interpose so seasonably and critically as to cover the honour of God's moral Government from insult. Without one or other of these conditions, Superstition would break loose at once, and over-run the World: for Bigotry (always in close conjunction with our natural malignity) would convert every unusual appearance of natural evil into a Pu-

nishment and Prodigy. It hath in fact done so : and every Age and Religion hath abounded with these spurious Judgments, to the violation of charity, and the dishonour of God's moral Government. And yet an ordinary attention to the obvious and rational conditions here pointed out, would have prevented this mischief : for I know but of one instance in all Antiquity which could embarrass the decision : and that is, not the expedition of *Cambyfes* ; for it would have been a greater wonder that an Army had got safe through the sands of those Deserts, than that it perished in them. The case I mean is the destruction of *Brennus's* Army before *Delphi*. Here, neither of the conditions seemed wanting. The Priests of *Apollo*, we are told, *predicted* the ensuing desolation : and the *cause* (which was the punishment of impiety and irreligion) appeared not altogether unworthy the Divine interposition. These, together with the faith due to the best human testimony, which strangely concurred to support the Fact, were, I presume, the reasons that inclined the excellent Dean *Prideaux* to esteem the accident *miraculous* : not so weakly as hath been re-

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presented

presented by some; nor yet with that maturity of judgment, which one would expect from so great a master of ancient History. His words are these — “ *Brennus* “ marched on with the gross of his army “ towards *Delphos* to plunder the temple — “ But he there met a wonderful defeat. “ For on his approaching the place, there “ happened a terrible storm of thunder, “ lightening, and hail, which destroyed “ great numbers of his men, and, at the “ same time, there was as terrible an earthquake, which rending the mountains in “ pieces, threw down whole rocks upon “ them, which overwhelmed them by “ hundreds at a time. — Thus was God “ pleased, in a very extraordinary manner, “ to execute his vengeance upon those sacrilegious wretches for the sake of religion in general, how false and idolatrous soever that religion was, for which that “ Temple at *Delphos* was erected.” The learned Historian, we see, supposes, and he is not mistaken, that *Brennus* and his *Gauls* acknowledged the Divinity of *Apollo*. *Julius Cæsar* informs us, that the *Gauls* had

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very near the same sentiments of the greater Deities with the *Greeks* and *Romans*. And, distinct from his authority, we know, that the pagan principle of *intercommunity* made their national Gods free of all countries, *Brennus's*, therefore, was a Sacrilege in all its forms. But notwithstanding there are many strong objections to the Dean's notion concerning the *quality* of the disaster.

THIS sacred Place, the Repository of immense riches, had, at other times, been attempted with impunity; nay with success, for it had been so often plundered, that, when Strabo wrote, the Temple was become exceeding poor^w. And if, amongst these several insults, there were any more worthy the divine interposition, *for the sake of Religion in general*, than the rest, it was when the *Phocenses*, the natural and civil Protectors of the Temple, plundered it of all its wealth, to raise an army of mercenary soldiers. And yet, at that time, the offended Deity gave no marks of his displeasure. Now to suppose, when several attempts of this kind had suc-

^w νυνί γέ τοι πενέσαλόν ἐστι τὸ ἐν Δελφοῖς ἱερόν.
Lib. ix.

ceeded,

ceeded, That the failure of one, though attended with some uncommon circumstances, was a divine interposition, is going very far in favour of an Hypothesis. If it should be said, that the God of *Israel* suffered his own Temple to be several times insulted (which *Julian* himself takes care to remember^x) and yet at last vindicated the honour of his name; I reply, There was this material difference in the case, that whenever the Temple of the *Jews* was violated, the evil was foretold as due to their crimes, and the people made acquainted with the impending punishment: and that now when it's honours were attempted to be restored, it was in defiance of a Prophecy which had doomed it to a final desolation.

THERE is yet a stronger objection to the learned Dean's solution, which is, that had the defeat been miraculous, it could never have been deemed as effected *for the sake of religion in general*, but in *vindication of their false Gods*: For, the History of it informs us, that the Priests of the Temple *denounced* the approaching Vengeance; and

^x See p. 57.

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ascribed it to the wrath and Power of *Apollo* and his two Sisters. So that this intervention would have been the means of fixing Idolatry, and rivetting it down upon the Pagan world.

BUT what is still more, the circumstances of the times did not at all favour a miracle for the purpose assigned, namely *for the sake of religion in general*, against impiety. The Popular folly, in the Pagan world, ran all the other way. It was not *irreligion*, but *superstition* that then infected Mankind. They had no need of a Miracle to remind them of the superintendency of Providence; they were but too apt without it, to ascribe every unusual appearance of nature to moral agency. So that had Heaven *now* thought fit to interfere; we

⁂ In hoc partium certamine repente universorum templorum Antistites, simul & ipsæ vates, sparsis crinibus, cum insignibus atque infulis, pavidì vecordesque in primam pugnantium aciem procurrunr: Advenisse DEUM clamant; eumque se vidisse desilientem in Templum — Juvenem supra humanum modum insignis pulchritudinis, comitesque ei duas armatas virgines ex propinquis duabus *Dianæ Minervæque* ædibus occurrisse, nec oculis tantum hæc se perspexisse; audisse etiam stridorem Arcûs ac strepitum Armorum. — *Just. lib. xxiv. c. 8.*

cannot

cannot but conclude, it had been rather in *discredit of idolatry in particular*, than in *behalf of religion in general*. — There is hardly any occasion to observe, that the reasons, which make against God's own intervention, hold equally against his permitting evil Spirits to co-operate with the delusions of their Priests.

HAVING, therefore, excluded all superior agency from this affair ; it will be incumbent on us to shew, by what human contrivance it might have been effected. For, it must be owned, its arrival at so critical a juncture will not easily suffer us to suppose it a mere *natural* event.

THE inclination of a Pagan Priest to assist his God in extremity will hardly be called in question. We see, by the round story of *those at Delphi*, that they were not embarrassed by vulgar scruples. They assured the people, they saw the God, at his first alighting, in the person of a young man of exquisite beauty ; and his two Virgin associates, *Diana* and *Minerva*, with each her proper arms of Bow and Spear : But they did not trust to their *eye-sight* only ; for they *heard*, besides, the clangor of their Arms. So

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So much for a good disposition. Their Address was not at all inferior. On the first rumour of *Brennus's* directing his march against them, they issued out Orders as from the Oracle, to all the region round, forbidding the country People to secrete or bear away their wine and provisions. The effects of this order succeeded to their expectation. The half-starved Barbarians, finding, on their arrival in *Phocis*, so great a plenty of all things, made short marches, dispersed themselves over the country, and revelled in the abundance that was provided for them. This respite gave time to the Friends and Allies of the God to come to the assistance of his Priests : so that by such time as *Brennus* was sat down at the foot of the Rocks, there was a numerous Garrison within to dispute his ascent ^z.

^z Gallorum vulgus, ex longâ inopiâ, ubi primum vino cæterisque com meatibus referta rura invenit, non minus abundantia quam victoriâ lætum, per agros se sparserat; desertisque signis, ad occupanda omnia pro victoribus vagabantur. Quæ res dilationem Delphis dedit. Prima namque opinione adventûs Gallorum prohibiti Agrestes oraculis feruntur, messes, vinaque villis efferre.—Salutare præceptum—velut morâ Gallis objectâ auxilia finitimorum convenere. Justin. lib. xxiv.

c 7.

THEIR

THEIR advantages of situation, likewise seconded their good disposition and address. The Town and Temple of *Delphi* was seated on a bare and cavernous rock ; defended, on all sides, with precipices, instead of walls. The Recess within assumed the form of a Theatre : so that the shouts of Soldiers, and the notes of military Instruments re-echoing from rock to rock, and from cavern to cavern, increased the sounds to an immense degree. Which, as the Historian observes, could not but have great effects on ignorant and barbarous minds^a.

THE playing off these Panic terrors was not indeed sufficient of itself to repulse and dissipate a Host of fierce and hungry Invaders ; but it enabled the Defenders of the place to keep them at bay, till a more so-

^a — Templum & Civitatem non muri, sed præcipitia ; non manu facta, sed naturalia præsidia defendunt ; prorsus ut incertum sit, utrum munimentum loci, an Majestas Dei plus hic admirationis habeat. Media saxi rupes in formam Theatri recessit. Quamobrem & hominum clamor, & si quando accedit tubarum sonus, personantibus & respondentibus inter se rupibus, multiplex audiri, ampliorque quàm editur, resonare solet. Quæ res majorem Majestatis terrorem ignaris rei, & admirationem stupentibus plerumque affert. Just. l. xxiv. c. 6.

lid entertainment was provided for them. I mean the *Explosion*, and fall of that portion of the Rock, at the foot of which the greater part of the Army was encamped.

FOR the Town and Temple, as we observed, were seated on a bare and hollow Rock ; which would afford vent-holes for such fumes as generated within, to transpire. One of these, from an intoxicating quality, discovered in the steam which issued from it, was rendered very famous, by being fitted to the Recipient of the Priests of *Apollo* ^b. Now if we only suppose this, or any other of the vapours, issuing from the fissures in so large and cavernous a rock, to be endowed with that

^b Ἡκιστα ᾗ καὶ ὡς ἄνδρες ποιμαίνοντες, ἐπιλύχοιεν τῷ μαντείῳ καὶ ἑνθεοὶ τε ἐγένοντο ὑπὸ τῆς αἰμῆς καὶ ἐμανθίσαντο ἐξ Ἀπόλλωνος. Pausan. Phoc. c. v. — Φασὶ δ' εἶναι τὸ μαντεῖον, ἄντρον κοῖλον καὶ βάθος, καὶ μάλα ἐνρύσομον· ἀναφέρει δ' ἐξ αὐτῆς πνεῦμα ἐνθεσιαστικόν. Strabo Geogr. l. ix. — In hoc rupis anfractu, media ferme montis altitudine, planities exigua est, atque in ea profundum terræ foramen, quod in Oracula patet : ex quo frigidus spiritus, vi quadam velut vento in sublime expulsus, mentes Vatum in vecordiam vertit, impletasque Deo, responsa consulentibus dare cogit. Just. l. xxiv. c. 6.

unctuous

unctuous or otherwise inflammatory quality which modern experience shews us to be common in mines and subterraneous hollows, we can easily conceive how the Priests of the Temple might, without a Miracle, be able to work the wonders which History speaks of as effected in this transaction. For the throwing down a lighted torch or two into a chasm from whence such a vapour issued, would set the whole into a flame ; which, by rarifying and dilating the inclosed air, would, like fired Gunpowder, blow up all before it. These effects are so known and dreaded in some of the Coal-mines in the north of this Kingdom, subject to such inflammatory vapours, that, instead of lamps or candles, which would be fatal, the workmen are obliged to have recourse to a very extraordinary contrivance to give them light, which is the application of a flint to a steel Cylinder in motion. And we cannot suppose the Priests, the Guardians of the place, could be long ignorant of such a quality ; which, either chance or designed experiments might bring them acquainted with ; Or that they would divulge it when they had discovered it. I am even inclined to think,

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think, they had the art of managing this quality at pleasure; so as to produce a greater or less effect, as their occasions required. It is certain, *Strabo* relates^c, that one *Onomarchus* with his Companions, as they were attempting by night to dig their way through to rob the holy Treasury, were frightened from their work by the violent shaking of the Rock: and he adds, that the same Phenomenon had defeated many other attempts of the like nature. Now whether the tapers which *Onomarchus* and his companions were obliged to use while they were at work, inflamed the Vapour, or whether the Priests of *Apollo* heard them at it, and set fire to a counter-terrine, it is certain, a *quality* of this kind would always stand them in stead.

SUCH, then, I presume, was the expedient they employed to dislodge this Nest of Hornets, which had settled at the foot of their sacred Rock.

^c Ονόμαρχον ὑπὸ χειρὸς ἀνίστασθαι ἀνασκάπτειν νύκτωρ
 σεισμῶν γενομένων μεγάλων, ἔξω τῆς ναῦς πέτεσθαι, καὶ
 παύσασθαι τὴν ἀνασκαφὴν ἐμβαλεῖν δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις
 φόβον τὴν ποταμῆος ὑπὸ χειρὸς αὐτοῦ. *Strab. Geogr. l. ix.*

IT is further remarkable that this explosion was followed (as it was likely it should) with a mere physical event of as much terror and affright, a *storm of thunder, lightning, and hail*, which these violent concussions of the air naturally generate. For Justin assures us ^d, the Tempest did not happen till *after* the fall of the Rock; though the *Dean*, we see, makes them operate together.

BUT what, after all, if these Barbarians were something less unfortunate than the Priests of *Apollo* would have us think them; and had got a considerable booty before they fell into this disgrace? *Strabo* tells an odd story^e of the Roman General *Cæpio's* finding a vast treasure at *Tolose*, supposed to be part of the riches which its Inhabitants, the *Tectosages*, had brought home from this very expedition against the *Delphian God*.

^d *Insecuta deinde tempestas est, quæ grandine & frigore faucios ex vulneribus absumpsit. l. xxiv. c. 8.*

^e — καὶ οὗτοὶ Τεκτοσάγας ἣ φασὶ μεταχρεῖν τῇ Διελφῶς στρατίας, ἐπὶ τὰς τε θησαυρὸς οὗτοὶ ὄρεθον τὰς παρ' αὐτοῖς, ὑπὸ Καίπιων & Στρατηγῶν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐν πόλει Τολώσῃ, τῇ ἐκείθεν χρημάτων μέγεθος εἶναι φασὶ προοδεῖναι ἣ οὗτοὶ ἀνθρώπους, καὶ ἐν τῇ ἰδίῳ οἴκῳ ἀντιρεῖναι καὶ ἐξίλασθαι μὲν τῇ θεῶν. L. iv.

It would almost make one suspect, that the Priests, before they came to extremities with the sacred Rock, had entered into treaty with these Barbarians, and paid them a large tribute to decamp and quit the Country ; which possibly they might receive with the same good faith their Countrymen, in a like expedition, weighed out the *Roman gold*, before the Capitol ; and so necessitate the *Delphians* to send down the Rock upon them to clear accounts ; just as, in the other instance, *Camillus* revenged their extortion in *Italy*. What seems to strengthen our conjecture is, that the *Tectosages*, in order to appease the offended Deity, had consecrated this treasure to holy uses, with an addition of their own. Nor does it take from the credit of the story, that all which the penetrating *Strabo* hath to oppose, is the ill success of *Brennus* and his followers, as we find it related in the common histories of the expedition. If this were the case, the pretended Miracle shrinks into a Prodigy of the most slender form.

HOWEVER, the account given above seems, on the whole, to be the true solution

tion of this extraordinary event. It is easy and natural; and the cause equal to the effect. But my chief reason for being so explicit, was to add still further support to our general conclusion; as the detail would shew, that all the main circumstances in the destruction at *Delphi*, and in that at *Jerusalem*, were essentially different.

THE *Rock* on which *Delphi* stood, was exactly fitted for such a contrivance: The *Mountain* at *Jerusalem*, by its compactness and contiguity, altogether improper.

THE easy *object* of *Apollo's* resentment was a rabble of half-starved and half-intoxicated Barbarians: The *object* of the resentment of the God of *Israel* was a select number of the politest, joined to the shrewdest People, who were detached to support the Emperor's project, which the ablest artists of all kinds there assembled were ready to put in execution.

THE *Priests* of *Apollo* were masters of the Town and Temple, and supported by a powerful Garrison: Both the *Priests* and *People* of the God of *Israel* were dispersed, and had left the place free and open to their enemies.

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BUT the principal difference lay in the grounds and reasons of the thing. By which I do not mean, that one event was supposed to be the agency of *a God of the Greeks*, and the other of *the God of the Jews*: For, who was the *true*, and who the *false* God, the Gentlemen, with whom we are concerned, seem willing should remain undetermined. The difference lay in this, That the interposition of the *Delphian God* was to save the treasures of his Priests; which he had, at other times, and on more flagitious terms, suffered to be plundered. But the interposition of the *Lord of Hosts* was to save the honour of his word, which he hath never since suffered to be impeached by malice or impiety, throughout a course of fourteen hundred years. Or, in other words, to defend the general system of Revelation from being forcibly borne down by the whole power of the *Roman Empire*. For the attempt to re-establish the *Jewish* Worship was professedly and publicly to give the lye to the *Prophecies* on which Christianity was founded, that is, to the *God of Heaven* himself: the *most important occasion* we can conceive

conceive of exerting his power, as including in it a NECESSITY to exert it. But more of this, when I come, hereafter, to speak of the nature of that Evidence which demands the assent of every reasonable man to a miraculous fact.

IN the mean time we will turn to our *Mathematician* ; and request him to prepare his Tables of Calculation ; if for no other purpose than to gratify our curiosity in the *doctrine of Chances*. When he is ready, let us know, how many millions to one are the odds against a *natural eruption's* securing the honour of the Christian Religion, at that very important juncture when God's Omnipotence was thus openly defied ; and not by this or that crack-brained Atheist, but by all the powers of the world combined against it. Let him add these other circumstances, that the Mountain of the Temple, was, both from its frame and situation, most unlikely to be the scene of a *natural eruption* : and that this eruption was confined, contrary to its usual course, to that very spot of ground : and then see how these will increase the odds. But his task is but begun ; he must reckon

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another circumstance, the Fire's obstinately breaking out by fits, as often as they attempted to proceed ; and its total extinction on their giving up the enterprize : let him, I say, add this to the account, and see how it will then stand. To these, too, he must join the Phenomena of the Cross in the Air, and on the Garments ; which will open a new carrier to his calculations. And further, to inflame the reckoning, he may take notice, that History speaks but of *one* other commotion in the intrails of this Hill, which likewise happened at a very critical juncture, the *Crucifixion* of our Lord, when the *vail of the Temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom*. Lastly, he may reflect, if he pleases, that all these odds lie on the side of a divine Interposition to hinder an *attempt*, which a space of fourteen hundred years hath never seen revived ; though the project itself (the restoration of one of the most celebrated Temples in the world) is in its nature most alluring to superstition ; and though the imbecillity of Religion and Government, and the various Revolutions there undergone, have afforded ample opportunity to a rich and crafty People to effect what was the only means

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of

of wiping out their opprobrium, and redeeming them from universal Contempt. He must, I say, take in all this before he sums up the account. And then, if he be ingenuous, without doubt, he will confess, that to compute the immensity of these odds will exceed all the powers of Numbers.

To speak freely, The pretence of accounting for it by a *natural cause* is a wretched evasion. Let us consider how differently Unbelievers are wont to treat those parallel Miracles, *The bursting of water from the Rock at the command of Moses*; and, *of fire from the earth to punish the rebellion of Korah*. No man was ever so wild to charge these Facts to the account of *natural causes*. And yet, the sudden gushing out of water from a Rock is certainly a more usual event than a burning Mountain. But the reason of their reserve, in these instances, is plain ; they had other causes at hand, besides natural events, to exclude a miracle ; such as human artifice and contrivance ; the uncertainty of very early History, &c. But, in the Eruption from the foundations of the Temple, the Fact

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was so perfectly well circumstanced, that an Objector found nothing else left to trade with but this last miserable shift : which, when all other means fail, is still at hand to keep back that Bugbear to Impiety, GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT.

IN support of all that hath been said, give me leave to observe, That the contemporary Evidence, who, from their more intimate knowledge of the fact, must needs be allowed the best judges of its nature in general, give no intimation that they themselves thought, or that others suspected it to be a *natural event*. *Julian*, indeed, to cover his confusion, insinuates^f something like it, but under cover of the destruction of the Temple at *Daphne*^g; and, otherwise, in so oblique and obscure a manner as shews him to be ashamed of so foolish an evasion. But then his honest and well-instructed Advocate, *Amm. Marcellinus*, is far from giving into this suspicion; the different manner in which he relates the two events at *Nicomedia* and *Jerusalem*

^f See p. 58, and 62.

^g Which, it is not unlikely, was burnt by common lightening, though *Julian*, in his *Misopogon*, directly charges it on the Christians.

evidently imply the contrary. In his account of the *former*, out of the pure parade of Science, he digresses, on the physical causes of *Earthquakes*. In the *latter*, (would the fact have born him out) he had better reasons than an affectation to shew his learning, to tell us what the Philosophers had said most plausible, in favour of a natural event ; for if so, the true *cause* was universally mistaken ; and Paganism was essentially concerned to have that mistake rectified : on the contrary, *Ammianus* hath contributed to support the general opinion, by expressions which evidently imply *superior agency*. Yet was this candid Historian nothing shy in speaking his mind, when he conceived either fraud or superstition had too large a share in common reports. For, mentioning the conflagration of *Apollo's* temple at *Daphne*, which the Christians boasted to be miraculously consumed by Lightning, he frankly declares it was suspected to have been set on fire by themselves ^h. But why need I insist on the conduct of so fair an Adversary as *Marcellinus*,

^h Suspicabatur id Christianos egisse stimulos invidie, quod idem Templum inviti videbant ambitioso circumdari peristylio. L. xxii. c. 13.

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when *Libanius*, and the rest of *Julian's* Sophists, those bigots to Paganism, and inflammers of their master's Follies, dared not so much as mutter the least suspicion of this nature. Nor was their silence the effect of fear, or want of good-will. In more dangerous and offensive matters they spoke freely; and with insolence enough: For when the Christians every where gave out that the death of *Julian* was miraculous; These Friends of his, publicly maintained, that he was basely assassinated by a Christian Soldier; and undertook to make good the charge, at their own peril, if the Emperor would appoint Commissaries to examine into the Factⁱ. Lastly, the *Fathers*, and *Church*

ⁱ By what I can gather from Antiquity, this seems to have been a very groundless charge. *Eutropius*, who was in the action, and *Marcellinus*, who served there in the *Body-guards*, seem neither of them to have entertained a suspicion of this kind. *Julian* was wounded at the very instant when the darts of the *Parthians* were known to do the most execution, that is, in one of their *feigned retreats*. — “Clamabant hinc inde Candidati (says *Ammianus*) ut fugientium molem, tanquam ruinam malè compositi culminis declinaret.” lib. xxv. c. 3. And as to that circumstance, so much insisted on by the friends of *Julian*, “That *Sapor* being willing to recompense the man whose hand had worked his deliverance, published a reward, which no body came in

Historians

Historians, who are so large in establishing the credit of God's interposition at *Jerusalem*, offered us not the least hint that their Adversaries ever thought of evading it by the pretence of a *natural event*.

to receive," it is so far from being extraordinary, that to distinguish a particular stroke amidst a general flight of arrows seems unreasonable to expect. Yet as foolish as this circumstance is, the Christians themselves extolled it, in order to support the *miracle* of his Death. For few were so strangely indiscrete as *Sozomene*, to defend the *morality* of the pretended Assassinate: A rashness which does more dishonour to the Faith, than all that the contrivances of *Julian* could bring upon it. However, this folly, to speak no worse of it, is not to be charged on *Christian Principles*, but on the *Pagan*; which this Historian would not suffer his *Christianity* to correct. The cutting off a Tyrant was one of the most illustrious of the Pagan virtues: which made an eminent *French* writer say, " Il y avoit un certain *Droit des Gens*, un opinion etablie dans toutes les Republiques de *Grece* & d'*Italie*, qui faisoit regarder comme un homme vertueux l'assassin de celui qui avoit usurpé la souveraine Puissance." — *Cons. sur les causes de la grandeur des Romains*, &c. c. 11. — But this I leave, with *Julian's* other adventures, to my Learned Friend, Mr. *Fortin*: who, I hope, will soon oblige the Public with his curious Dissertations on Ecclesiastical Antiquity; composed, like his life, not in the spirit of *Controversy*, nor, what is still worse, of *Party*, but of *Truth* and *Candor*.

WE

WE shall CONCLUDE with a short recapitulation of the whole ARGUMENT.

FIRST, it hath been shewn, That the *occasion* was most important; and that the credit and honour of Revelation required God's interposition at this juncture.

THAT *Julian* aggravated the impiety of his attempt, by all the insulting circumstances most likely to bring upon him the vengeance of Heaven.

THAT the *Fact* was, in its nature, such as least admitted of unfaithful accounts concerning it.

THAT the *Event* is established by all the power of human Testimony: That the Church hath borne witness to it by a full, consistent, and contemporary Evidence: that the adversaries of our holy Faith, who were in the neighbourhood of the scene, and the followers of *Julian*, who were most partial to his views, have confirmed it; and lastly, that the Emperor himself hath confessed it, though with that dissingenuity which characterises the *Sophist*
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and the *Bigot*, in what party soever they are found.

THE OBJECTIONS to the reality of the Miracle were then considered.

IT hath been shewn, that, from the word of Prophecy, and the course of God's Dispensations, his interposition was even *necessary* to support the honour of Religion.

THAT the Evidence of the Historian, *Am. Marcellinus*, is so full and perfect in all its parts, that there is no circumstance existing in his Character or Testimony, which an Unbeliever could abuse to keep back his assent ; nor any circumstance wanting, which a Believer would desire, to prevent a cavil.

THAT the several accounts of the *Fathers of the Church* and the *Ecclesiastical Historians* are not only consistent with, but highly corroborative of, one another : and, that such parts of their relations as appear at first sight most prodigious, are indeed, when maturely examined, the parts which most deserve credit.

THAT

THAT it is very unlikely, nay almost impossible, that the Eruption should be the effect of *human art and contrivance* :

AND lastly, that it is no less absurd to suppose it a *natural event*.

THUS new light continually springing up from each circumstance as it passed in review; by such time as the whole was considered, this illustrious Miracle, we see, hath come out in one full blaze of evidence.

WHEN, therefore, the Reader reflects, how little this invincible Demonstration for our holy Faith had been hitherto attended to; how slightly it was touched upon; and how hastily and slovenly hurried over, He will possibly see cause to wonder as much at this strange inattention as at the unreasonable credulity of the blind adorers of Antiquity. For though it hath ever struck the learned and impartial observer with the superiority of its evidence, yet no one before, that I know of, hath thought fit, to set that superiority in a just light, though provoked to it by what is most provoking, the indiscretion of our FRIENDS: Some of whom have hinted their suspicions in
private;

private ; and others given more open intimations of its falshood.

THIS, in part, may be owing to those ticklish circumstances in the evidence of the *Fathers*; which, on examination, we have shewn to be its principal support. But what hath chiefly occasioned this neglect, I am persuaded, is the state and condition of the *Ecclesiastical History* of that time ; when the light of Miracles was surrounded with such a swarm of Monkish Fables, as darkened the brightest of its rays ; so that nothing, but the force of its divine extraction, could ever have broke through them. Nay, as if these unhappy Artificers *designed* what they *effected*, they were not content to counterfeit the hand of God on other occasions, but would try their skill on *this*, where it had been so eminently displayed ; and would mimic even its most essential and triumphant circumstances. Thus *Church History* informs us, that when *Julian* and his brother *Gallus* projected to build a *Temple* over the Sepulchre of one *St. Mamas*, that part which *Julian* undertook *fell down again* as soon as it was built ; the Saint, it seems, disdaining the Service of the future Apostate. The cloudy Monk, who invented this fable, had, we see, two conceits

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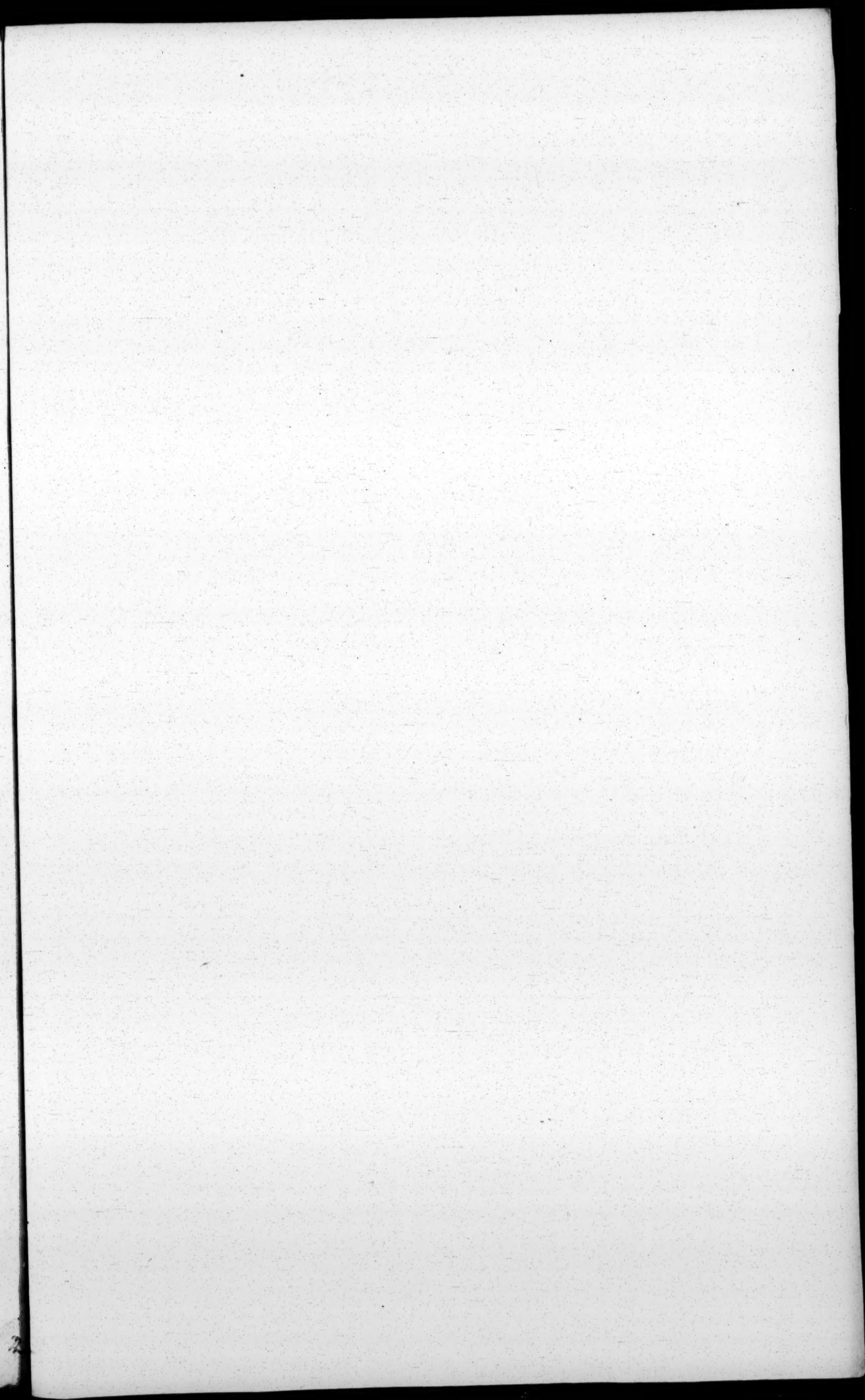
conceits in his head: he would compare *Julian* to *Cain*, and yet not give him the privilege of that Out-law, but make him an unlucky Builder through life. The same *History* again informs us ^k, That once, when *Julian* sacrificed, there was found impressed upon the entrails of the victim, *a Cross within a crown or circle*: for when the Monks had once got the Apostate into their Hands, they considered him as a Demoniac they were to exorcise; and so, charmed and tormented him with *Crosses*.

Thus they dressed up their Impostures, as like as they could, in garb and fashion, to Miracles of heavenly extraction; with the Spirit, or (must we say?) in *imitation* of those Pagan Priests who forged their *Ancilia*, to secure the *sacred shield* which fell from Heaven. As if they had taken it into their heads, that true Miracles, unattended with Delusions, were in the same danger from the Enemies of the Faith, that the *Palladium* of Rome was from Robbers without a numerous Guard of brazen Counterfeits.

^k Greg. Naz. Orat. iii. Soz. l. v. c. 2.



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